

STIMSON

REGIONAL
VOICES

Islam and Politics

Renewal and Resistance
in the Muslim World



AMIT PANDYA
ELLEN LAIPSON
Editors

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PRAGMATIC STEPS FOR GLOBAL SECURITY

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The **Institute of Policy Studies (IPS)**, based in Islamabad and founded in 1979, is an autonomous, nonprofit, civil society organization, dedicated to promoting policy-oriented research on Pakistan affairs, international relations, and religion and faith. IPS provides a forum for informed discussion and dialogue on national and international issues; formulates viable plans; and presents key initiatives and policy measures to policymakers, analysts, political leaders, legislators, researchers, academia, civil society organizations, media, and other stakeholders. Periodicals and publications, interaction, dialogue, thematic research, and capacity-building programs are instrumental in its research endeavors. IPS garners collaboration as well as extends its active cooperation to other organizations in one or more areas of research.



STIMSON The **Henry L. Stimson Center**, located in Washington, DC, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan institution devoted to offering practical solutions to problems of national and international security. Since its establishment in 1989, Stimson has been committed to meaningful impact, a thorough integration of analysis and outreach, and a creative and innovative approach to global security challenges. Stimson has three basic program areas: reducing the threat of weapons of mass destruction, building regional security, and strengthening institutions of international peace and security. These program areas encompass work on a wide range of issues, from nonproliferation to transnational challenges in Asia, from UN peacekeeping operations to analyzing the resources needed for 21st century statecraft.

Preface

Stimson's *Regional Voices: Transnational Challenges* project is devoted to enhancing the information and analysis available to US policymakers about emerging transnational security challenges in the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and East Africa. The project draws on analysis by technical and subject experts, as well as by political and strategic thinkers.

The knowledge and analysis are developed by means of dialogue among experts from various disciplines and occupational backgrounds. Our work includes the organization of workshops in the regions, partnerships with regional institutions and individuals, interviews in the field, and research. We have sought the input of experts and practitioners who constitute new voices in the conversation with the US government. We have not shied away from perspectives that dissent from conventional wisdom, as long as they represent significant bodies of opinion in the countries of the regions.

In 2007, we organized our work by region and sought to arrive at an understanding of perspectives specific to each. This was reflected in our 2008 publication *Transnational Trends: Middle Eastern and Asian Views*. During 2008, we have engaged in dialogue and collaboration across all the regions and organized our work topically on themes as varied as the political economy of natural resources, climate change and river systems, maritime resources and security in the Indian Ocean, and the relationship between Islam and politics.

We have tried to integrate these varied inquiries by asking the following overarching questions:

- What are the key relationships among social, economic, environmental, technological, and political trends? How do these trends relate to traditional security concerns? What new sources of instability, crisis, or conflict are found in these, and with what consequences?
- How does the current public policy debate address the technical, governance, and cultural challenges of these specialized subject areas?
- How do political structures and cultural traditions constrain or facilitate effective responses?

- What are the current examples and future opportunities for transnational cooperation?
- What are the social, political, and security consequences of rapid change?

We have sought throughout to maintain a transnational perspective, to look at trends or threats that transcend national borders or are national in scope but recur in many societies in a region. In all our conversations, conferences, meetings, roundtables, and focus groups, we have sought to elicit the most candid possible discussion, and we have done so by explicitly placing all conversations off the record and not for attribution.

Each volume in the present series consists of essays on some of these questions by experts and thinkers from the regions covered, accompanied by one or more essays by Stimson scholars designed to synthesize and analyze our findings and describe the key trends that we have noted.

Amit Pandya

Director, *Regional Voices: Transnational Challenges*

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This volume would not have been possible without the generous contribution of time, energy, and intellectual analysis of numerous experts abroad and in the United States. In addition, many people worked tirelessly behind the scenes to shepherd it through all stages of publication.

Our partner, the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) in Islamabad, Pakistan, deserves a special thanks for helping us design the initial concept and for carrying out a workshop of international experts in Islamabad in July 2008. I am particularly indebted to the hospitality and intellectual vigor provided by IPS Chairman Khurshid Ahmad and by Khalid Rahman, IPS Director General. Our partner, the Institute of Islamic Studies in Mumbai, India, has also been indispensable to this inquiry. I am particularly grateful to Asghar Ali Engineer and Irfan Engineer of that institution for their intellectual guidance. I also wish to express my gratitude to Mustafa Alani and Mohamed Raouf of our partner the Gulf Research Center in Dubai, and to Prakhar Sharma to whom we were introduced by our partner the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore.

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This volume owes its existence to the contributions of the *Regional Voices* team and others who worked behind the scenes. Research Associates Jumaina Siddiqui and Duaa Elzeney played an essential role in the organization of the Islamabad workshop. Jumaina Siddiqui also provided valuable research and logistical support for the volume. Stimson President Ellen Laipson, who coedited this volume, provided vision and intellectual guidance. Stimson's Director for External Relations, Nancy Langer, played a significant role in bringing this volume to completion, as did Laura Kim, who is largely responsible for the production

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Amit A. Pandya

Director, *Regional Voices: Transnational Challenges*

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Introduction

In the past two years, Stimson's *Regional Voices: Transnational Challenges* project has reached out to a wide variety of thinkers in the Muslim world: Islamic religious scholars, Muslim political theorists, and others, such as journalists and academics, who concern themselves with the pressing public issues of their societies. We have engaged in protracted discussions and in intellectual collaborations of various kinds, including the papers collected here, focus groups, and monitoring of the periodical press, in an effort to understand how public issues are understood and approached from within the Muslim world. In this, we are fortunate to have enjoyed the partnership of the Institute of Policy Studies in Islamabad, Pakistan, with which we organized an international meeting in Islamabad in July 2008; and the Institute of Islamic Studies in Mumbai, India; as well as institutions throughout the Muslim world (see annex 3 for a complete list and description of our partner institutions).

Such a conversation is of course one of many dialogues or encounters taking place between the West and the Muslim world. We have tried to concentrate our efforts on elucidating how certain key ideas are approached. The ideas that we have focused on have been those that go to the heart of the difficulty between the West and the Muslim world. These include mutual concerns about violence perpetrated by the other, and a mutual perception of a fundamental divergence in approaches to the proper relationship between religion and the governance of society. These differences are located in a larger context of a generalized sense of mutual grievance and ill will.

Our work on the relationship between religion and public life has in turn been one area of work in a broader inquiry. In the past year, we have also engaged in extensive and substantial dialogue and collaboration on other themes with individuals and experts in the Middle East, South Asia, and Southeast Asia, and are beginning to work with partners in East Africa. This work has included inquiries into the political economy of natural resources, climate change and river systems, and maritime resources and security in the Indian Ocean. We have striven to integrate these varied inquiries, by asking, for example, how evolving contemporary public discourse in Muslim societies is addressing the technical, governance, and cultural challenges of these specialized subject areas.

In all our conversations, conferences, meetings, roundtables, and focus groups, we have sought to elicit the most candid possible discussion, and we have done so by explicitly placing all conversations off the record and not for attribution. At times, our interlocutors have informed us that they would not conceive of saying publicly what they are willing to say under such safeguards in a small group of their peers.

It will be readily apparent that the geographical range of our work, while it encompasses the preponderant part of the world's Muslims, also includes nations of substantial size where Muslims are in the minority and where the tacit or explicit foundational norms behind public discourse are Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, or explicitly secular. Thus, an essential part of our work is also to ask the following: How more generally are religious identity, religious conviction and values, and ideologies of social and political governance related to one another in today's world? What distinctions and commonalities are found in the ways that different religious or ideological traditions have addressed common challenges of social, economic, and political life?

That said, Muslims constitute the majority in one of our regions of interest (the Middle East), and, in the others, majorities of major nations (Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Pakistan, Sudan) or substantial and important minorities in non-Muslim nations (India, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Tanzania). Because US policy shows a high degree of interest in the Muslim world, our inquiry into the role of ideology has also substantially focused on the intellectual life of this world.

Among the themes that have emerged in the course of our work are the following:

- Identity and ideology are highly variegated across the Muslim world. The Muslim world and the world of Islamic thought are not monolithic, any more than is Christendom.
- Issues of identity, authority, and who speaks for Islam are hotly contested within particular Muslim societies and among Muslim societies.
- Inordinate interest in the cultural and theological dimensions of contemporary developments in the Muslim world has obscured the political character of most mobilization under way there: political mobilization more similar than dissimilar to that in non-Muslim societies.
- The wide range of opinion on key political and cultural questions in the Muslim world is not much appreciated in the West. This is particularly so in the case of views of violence in Islamic thought and in the Muslim world.
- The perspectives of Muslims living as minorities in non-Muslim majority countries (India, the Philippines Sri Lanka, and Thailand) are quite distinct from those of Muslims living in predominantly Muslim countries. Minority communities are slow to

radicalize, preferring alliances with non-Muslim political movements. Radicalization is rare, though increasing in certain quarters.

- Among these Muslim minorities, there is a high degree of animosity toward the United States. They believe that the global war on terror has legitimized repression against Muslims in countries such as India and the Philippines whose governments are US allies in the “war.” The pressure on Muslim communities and their civil rights is seen as a direct consequence of US demands on those governments for intelligence and counterterrorism cooperation.
- Anti-Western sentiment is also found among secular liberals. For example, Pakistan’s Westernized elites have turned against the West, not out of a sense of religiosity, but as a result of nationalist resentment.
- The West is often perceived as hostile to the renewal of Muslim societies. Among the perceived casualties of recent security policies of the West (and of the Muslim political elites allied to it) are worldwide Islamic charity and Islamic education. Charity is inhibited by measures against terrorist financing, and Islamic education is perceived as being under attack owing to concerns about the role of *madrassas* as incubators of extremism. Because both charity and education are central to the Islamic way of life and are constructive on their face, their inhibition as a matter of policy has become a symbol of Western destructiveness toward Islam.
- Identity is complex. A Muslim may simultaneously be a Pathan, of a particular tribe, a denizen of “Pushtoonistan” (a Pushtoon ethnic homeland straddling the Pakistan-Afghanistan border), an Afghan or Pakistani citizen, a member of a social class, either an Islamist or a religiously devout traditionalist, a member of the worldwide Muslim *ummah* (community), and a member of the international community through his or her country’s membership in international organizations either Islamic (the Organization of the Islamic Conference) or universalist (the United Nations).
- An important debate is taking place over whether adherence to “true” or “pure” Islam requires rejection of syncretic cultures comprising elements of preexistent cultural traditions. Some argue that the latter pose a distraction from proper Islamic practice and precept, while their opponents rejoin that the features of Arab culture in the time of the Prophet, or indeed today, are irrelevant to the definition of Islamic values and obligation.
- Pride in Muslim civilization draws on both inward-looking loyalty and cosmopolitanism. The latter in turn draws on the global vision of Islam and on the global community built by Muslims through imperial expansion, trade, and the travels of the famous Muslim travelers, chroniclers, and scientists.
- Such pride also draws on the acceptance and synthesis into Muslim thought and culture of non-Muslim traditions. For example, the Greco-Arab medical tradition

is described as the golden age of “Muslim” medicine. Other such elements include Persian and Urdu poetic traditions, and the philosophical and chivalric traditions of Islamic Spain.

- The complexity of Muslim identity is also found in Pan-Islamism. While this appeals to a sense of shared identity throughout the *ummah*, it also inevitably requires an appreciation of the wide varieties of national culture in the varied communities that constitute the *ummah*.

The papers collected here seek to offer an overview of salient aspects of the relationship between politics and Islam. We hope hereby to provide the non-expert Western reader an accurate glimpse into contemporary Muslim thinking about issues at the forefront of Western concern and to bring to light some important aspects of the discussion within the Muslim world that have been ignored by Western opinion. These are not discussions of religious philosophy, but rather of the significance of religion in the practice of statecraft.



Perspectives from the Regions

Political Islamist Movements: The Case of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

Diaa Rashwan

In the last few years, it has become clear that there is widespread interest in the relationship among political Islamist movements, politics, and governance in countries of the Islamic world in general, and the Arab world in particular. Interest has been spurred by developments in several Muslim countries over the last six years: a number of Islamist parties have contested general elections at the parliamentary and local levels, and some have scored significant electoral victories. These events have generated interest in trying to understand Islamists' positions on issues related to politics and governance, particularly since some Islamist parties have formed governments: the Justice and Development Party in Turkey and the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) in Palestine.

Politics and governance can be used as the criteria to define and categorize Islamist movements in general. Traditional measures for classifying these movements, such as “moderate,” “fundamentalist,” “extremist,” or “peaceful,” should be set aside. A better measure is the place politics and governance occupy in the Islamists' own world view. The term “Islamist movement” refers generally to groups that defer to some aspect or interpretation of Islam as their authoritative framework, whether in defining their existence or their goals. Such groups may employ differing means when implementing their vision of Islam in their communities, countries, or other areas of influence.^[1] The theoretical underpinnings of these movements (in addition to other related factors) play a pivotal role in distinguishing one group from another. Although certain criteria differentiate the movements—such as social background, political orientation, and approach to activism—the theoretical basis remains the most reliable classification.

Islamist movements can be divided into two major groupings, connected only by their affiliation to Islam. Otherwise they differ profoundly in how they affiliate themselves with Islam and interpret their religion. The first category includes sociopolitical groups that espouse a program of Islamization, while the second includes puritanical religious groups. The political grouping refers to those groups that maintain that their societies are already fully Muslim and that the only thing missing is a reorganization of their politics with a

program based on Islamic law. In contrast, the religious Islamist groups—both *jihadist* and non-*jihadist*—are primarily concerned with dogma. They maintain that their communities are not properly Islamic and must be persuaded to “re-Islamize,” either by preaching or by the sword. For them, politics and governance are merely means to an end but not goals in themselves.

Many people confuse these two groupings of Islamists despite recent developments on the world stage. Any perusal of the documents outlining key positions of the various factions of these two groupings affirms the profound gap between their theoretical and activist frameworks, suggesting that confusing or conflating them would be impossible. Blind spots persist, either deliberately or because observers lack knowledge. Similarly, developments in the Arab and Islamic world since the 9/11 attacks affirm that there can be no comparison between the widespread support of moderate, peaceful political movements and violent, extremist religious movements. Moderate, peaceful groups and parties have garnered tens of millions of votes in elections in 20 Arab and Islamic countries. Extremists have been unable to recruit more than a few thousand followers.

The history of Arab and Muslim countries, at least since the beginning of the 19th century, reveals that moderate, peaceful Islamist movements have dominated the scene, while the puritanical movements only began to appear in the 1960s. The moderate political movement manifested itself during the past two centuries in various groups, associations, organizations, and parties in almost every Muslim country, without ever disappearing from any of these countries despite multiple political, social, and economic challenges. The puritanical religious movement first appeared in Egypt with the writings of Sayyid Qutb, the well-known Islamist leader and former member of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB),¹ and then with the formation of small *jihadist* groups in the early 1970s.

The Nature of the Muslim Brotherhood and Its Historical Development

In accordance with the aforementioned classification scheme, the Muslim Brotherhood should generally be considered (particularly in Egypt) a sociopolitical movement with a generic Islamist program, which differs from other comparable groups—whether on the right, left, or center—only in the content of its agenda. The Brotherhood does not seek to rectify the alleged theological deviations of certain individuals or countries; in contrast to

¹ Sayyid Qutb (1906–66) was one of the most prominent Egyptian Islamist thinkers. He joined the Muslim Brotherhood in the early 1950s. He was arrested in 1954, set free in 1965, and then rearrested the following year. Qutb was brought to trial where he was sentenced to execution; this sentence was carried out that year. Qutb is considered the true founder of modern *jihadist* thought, which he expounded through his writings while in prison. Qutb completely went against the Brotherhood’s intellectual and political orientation. His most important works are *In the Shade of the Qur’an* and *Milestones*.

religious groups, it does not harbor doubts about whether the populace adheres to an orthodox understanding of Islam. Rather, its focus is to reorder the behavior of Muslim individuals and communities on the basis of its platform. This does not mean that the MB neglects theological issues; it puts them in their natural place at the forefront of an Islamic worldview. However, it does not attribute the current crisis in Muslim societies to their theologically going astray, whether in recent history or the more distant past. Instead, this situation is explained as the failure to implement true Islamic law as envisioned by the Brotherhood.

Ever since the Brotherhood was established in 1928 by Hasan al-Banna and six of his comrades, it has gone through significant changes in its theoretical and political outlook.^[2] Perhaps the most prominent is its transformation from an Egyptian organization to an international movement. The MB began by spreading to Egypt's neighbors in the late 1930s, and expanded in subsequent decades to most Islamic and even several Western countries. It maintains a presence in some form in approximately 60 countries.² Undoubtedly, the MB's broad reach and diverse manifestations highlight its primary characteristics: flexibility and adaptability while maintaining the elements that underpin the movement. This flexibility on the international level is not only found in its activist approach, but in its natural extension which marks its general intellectual and political outlook, whose details or features may differ from one local branch to the next. Adaptability may be the major characteristic that has distinguished the Brotherhood over the last 80 years. It is this quality that the vast majority of religious Islamist groups lack, and is continually reflected in their failure to grow over time or across borders. Because of the puritanical stagnancy of their intellectual and political vision, these other groups perpetually suffer historical and geographical retreat over the long term. Even if they appear to be making headway for a certain time or in a certain geographical context, they are, in fact, constantly susceptible to disappearing completely. Their only hope is to transform themselves into political groups modeled on the Brotherhood.

Theoretical Developments

We can now examine other developments that have left their mark on the MB's theoretical and political outlook, as well as its activist strategy. The first concerns the MB's intellectual sources over the course of its 80-year history. The Brotherhood relies on the sparse writings of its late founder for its theoretical and political approach, but has examined some of al-Banna's positions critically, particularly his refusal to acknowledge the validity

² There are many branches and fellow travelers of the Muslim Brotherhood in the Arab and Islamic world, including the Jordanian, Libyan, and Syrian branches, the Islamic Party in Iraq, the Islamic Action Front in Jordan, the Assembly for Reform in Yemen, the Movement for the Society of Peace in Algeria, the Islamic Constitutional Movement in Kuwait, the Hamas movement in Palestine, the Islamic Association in Lebanon, the Islamic Party in Malaysia, the Islamic Community in Germany, and the Muslim Association in Britain.

of political pluralism. The Brotherhood has officially sanctioned political pluralism since 1994, with its branches in Algeria, Jordan, Morocco, and Yemen forming political parties. Beyond al-Banna's two main books, *Epistles of the Martyred Imam* and *Memoirs of the Mission and the Missionary*,^[3] the MB's intellectual output was augmented by the group of thinkers who arose after al-Banna's assassination in 1949. At the forefront were Dr. Abdul-Qadir Awda, Shaykh Muhammad al-Ghazali, and Shaykh Sayyid Sabiq. The Brotherhood's intellectuals did not generally take a reformist approach to political and social issues, largely because of the difficult conditions to which the MB was subjected following al-Banna's assassination and the subsequent clash with the Nasserite regime after the revolution of July 23, 1952. Leaders and members preferred to stay within al-Banna's intellectual framework, although most of them did put forth some innovative interpretations (*ijtihad*).

The Brotherhood survived the "Inquisition"—as it is termed in MB literature—of the Nasserite regime and has engaged in general political work since the mid-1970s. This coincided with the "second founding" of the Brotherhood, when its ranks swelled with thousands of new university student recruits. This second generation of members helped renew the MB after the heavy clash between its founding generation and the Nasserite regime. Now, instead of referring exclusively to the ideas of its founder and the subsequent group of Brotherhood intellectuals, the door had been pushed open to intellectual sources from outside the Brotherhood. These novel sources began to influence the intellectual and activist outlook of the Brotherhood after the vast majority of the traditional thinkers of the Brotherhood had passed. Some of them came from independent writers and intellectuals who had been converted to Islamist ideas. They helped attract the generation of the second founding to the Brotherhood by proposing a more modern outlook for the Islamist program.³

Recent currents influencing certain thinkers and writers who were known for their Islamist bent and were close to the Brotherhood, although not members, were another important source of influence. Most possessed extensive experience in international or domestic affairs and were significantly well versed in modern culture.⁴ New influences on certain traditional intellectuals in the Brotherhood who wanted to modernize their world views played a role as well.⁵

³ Such people include Justice Tariq al-Bishri, Messrs. Fahmy Huwaidi and the late Adil Husayn, as well as Dr. Abdul-Wahhab al-Masiri, Dr. Muhammad Ammara, and the late Dr. Hamid Rabie and Dr. Jamal Hamdan.

⁴ Among this group were Drs. Ahmad Kamal Abu-l Majd and Muhammad Salim al-'Awa.

⁵ Among the more prominent of these are Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, who currently exerts enormous influence on the Brotherhood, as well as the Tunisian intellectual Rashid al-Ghanushi and the Lebanese thinker Faisal Mawlawi, among other original members of the MB.

Positions on Democracy

Thanks to the Muslim Brotherhood's considerable flexibility, the absorption of these new intellectual sources helped develop its overall outlook and several ideas related to politics. A number of its positions have evolved in recent decades. The MB has resolved its internal political debates according to the particular conditions in each country where it operates and has consequently resolved to accept the principles, institutions, and procedures of a modern democracy. This relates in particular to accepting elections as the sole means to obtain power, parliaments as institutions to affect social and political change, political pluralism as a mechanism for political action, and the peaceful transfer of power.

It has become clear on the international level that all the sociopolitical Islamist parties, such as the MB, that have become incorporated into the democratic political process in their respective countries have accepted the fundamental rules regulating the political process. There is no logical reason to assume that the MB would overturn these democratic rules and eschew the peaceful exchange of power even if it did manage to obtain a parliamentary majority in a future election. Similarly, the MB has affirmed its commitment in numerous documents officially published by the leadership committees, including the 1994 document and the Initiative for Political Reform, its political platform for the 2005 elections for the People's Assembly, its political platform for the 2007 elections for the Shura Council, and the draft platform for the MB's political party.^[4] Lastly, the MB's actions in the syndicate and general elections, in which it has sometimes obtained a majority of seats, again demonstrate its public acceptance of the rules governing elections.

Despite the positive and progressive positions of the MB, there is still some ambiguity on its stance toward internal political development. It is imperative that the MB clarify itself on these issues, especially those involving the rights of women and non-Muslim minorities. In several of its official documents, the MB has espoused equal rights and obligations between Muslims and non-Muslim minorities, and between Muslim men and women. Nevertheless, such positions are worded very generally, without details that would eliminate ambiguity, particularly about whether women and non-Muslims have a right to hold public office in Muslim-majority countries.

The MB's draft political platform suggests that it was composed by several authors: some supporters of the outreach mission (*dawa*) and other politicians. Its major positions appear to be the work of the *dawa* supporters, not the politicians, particularly in the first two sections: "The Principles and Stances of the Party" and "The State and the Political Regime." The *dawa* outlook is based on the attitude that the fundamental problem with Egyptian society is a lack of faith, not corrupt politics. This outlook displays a lack of confidence that most Egyptians have a correct understanding of or proper sincerity toward Islamic law. Thus, in the first two sections of the political platform, a committee of religious scholars

Women in the Muslim World

Jumaina Siddiqui

Women in the Muslim world are reclaiming Islam. They are using it to assert their rights and address growing extremism. In addition to adopting Islamic clothing, women are taking active roles in political and social groups and organizations that are motivated by Islamic principles and duties. There is a growing segment of the female Muslim population that is using Islam and Islamic principles to assert their standing in the community and the political system, and that is teaching a new generation of young Muslims, male and female alike, about tolerance and equality in Islam.

A rising number of young women are choosing to wear *hijab* in Turkey, which is cited as a model of secular democracy in the Muslim world. To uphold its secular principles, Turkey prohibits women from wearing the *hijab* in universities and government buildings. Women see the *hijab* as a way of expressing their Islamic identity, which should be permissible under the freedom Turkey's democratic system provides. The young women campaigning against the government regulation of *hijab* are seen as the next generation of political and social activists.

Young Jordanian women are looking to help their country strike a balance between Islam and democracy. They believe that Islam provides freedoms for women, but that extremist ideologies have co-opted the religion and its teachings and that a new type of Islamic government is needed.

To curb extremism, the Moroccan government has established a program recruiting female religious guides to preach tolerance and the rejection of violence by providing counseling and religious instruction in mosques and communities. In Syria, a growing number of young women are seeking to engage in in-depth studies of the Qur'an and Islam. Not only are girls memorizing the Qur'an, but they are also learning principles of Qur'anic reasoning and civic rights and responsibilities set forth under Islam. Girls are debating issues of voting and whether women have the right to vote differently than their husbands.

Egyptian women of all ages in Cairo have been involved in a larger Islamic revival in the form of the women's mosque movement for almost 30 years. The movement began with women gathering, first in private homes, then in mosques, for weekly lessons on religion and the Qur'an. The goals of the lessons are to combat the increase in secularism in Egyptian society and help women include Islam in their daily routines. Women in this movement are not calling for the implementation of *shariah* as the basis of governance and justice. The revival is to help Muslims, in particular women, learn the Islamic virtues in order to become better Muslims and, in turn, impart this knowledge to future generations.

would be established to ensure that the head of state and members of Parliament correctly implement Islamic law, as envisioned by the political platform. Elsewhere in these two sections, this viewpoint discounts the possibility of women and Copts, who constitute more than 60 percent of the Egyptian population, being appointed head of state.

There are three major reasons this *dawa* stamp dominates the draft party platform. The first concerns the circumstances under which the MB decided to announce the establishment

of a party. It has become clear that the MB was not seriously planning to establish a party; indeed, it would not have done so but for the constitutional amendments against religious-affiliated parties propagated by the ruling National Democratic Party. These amendments were meant to prohibit the MB from lawful partisanship, establishing a political party, and engaging in general political activity, on the basis that the group mixes political activism with religious activism.⁶

Second, the contradictions among certain sections of the political platform and the preponderance of the religious dimension can be traced to a problem the MB has been dealing with since its inception: the integration of the organization's constituent activities, which encompass religious proselytizing, social work, education, economic activities, and political action. Mixing these activities together is based on the concept of the "comprehensiveness of Islam," which is key in the movement's world view. The main problem with this is not the validity of the slogan, which refers to the totality of Islam and the propensity of various political, social, and religious aspects of Islam to overlap. Rather it is that this approach implies that the comprehensiveness of Islam can only be actualized by pursuing all these facets of life collectively, as opposed to addressing each facet individually. In truth, the comprehensiveness of Islam does not entail that every individual, group, institution, or even state should assume all these functions, as if they could only be accomplished when addressed simultaneously. Even at the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon Him) and the rightfully guided caliphs, the concept of the comprehensiveness of Islam had not yet meant that Muslims or their institutions were responsible for carrying out all these functions.

Some people were *hadith* scholars, some Quranic exegetes, jurists, judges, administrators and politicians, merchants, and soldiers. Granted, during the first years of Islam, it was often necessary to combine these careers, as the Muslim population was small. After it grew and the Islamic state expanded, these functions became distinguished from one another while simultaneously complementing each other, with the result that the true meaning of the totality of Islam was realized. In contrast, the MB—or at least a subsection of it—believes that its role is to carry out this totality in all of its aspects and functions, and that to differentiate or ignore any task would be paramount to disavowing the totality of Islam. This attitude is clearly manifested in the draft political platform and in the previous documents related to it.

⁶ The revised wording in article 5 of the Constitution, which prohibited the inclusion of religion in any state or political activity, directly resulted in the strengthening of the *dawa* wing. This pointed out that the platform must include more conservative religious dimensions in order to combat the dangers posed by the constitutional amendments to the role of religion in Egyptian society as seen by supporters of the *dawa* wing.

The third reason for this *dawa* stamp has to do with the varying social and generational makeup of the Muslim Brotherhood. The MB has a vast and widespread membership in Egyptian society. This means it must embrace people of differing political, social, and religious views, ranging from strictly conservative to liberal. Geography also fosters diversity and contributes to increasing the conservatism of the group. Most of the MB's new members and supporters composing the third generation reside in the countryside and in working-class areas, which are more traditional and socially conservative than the more affluent urban areas.

Position on Violence

Because of the Muslim Brotherhood's sociopolitical nature, neither its intellectual nor its activist outlook sanctions violence in any form to propagate what it believes is the most correct vision of Islamic law. The Brotherhood's theoretical and activist documents—Hasan al-Banna's *Epistles*, the writings of the intermediary generation of intellectuals such as Abdul-Qadir Awda and Muhammad al-Ghazali, and even the writings of the current generation—demonstrate that the Brotherhood has renounced the use of any violence as a political or social means or to expand the movement.

It is important to point out the confusion caused by Sayyid Qutb's writings vis-à-vis the thoughts and activism of the Muslim Brotherhood. Qutb, in conjunction with other thinkers of his generation,⁷ is well known for playing a major role in reestablishing the modern religious *jihadist* school on the world stage. Although the Brotherhood has never officially declared as much, Qutb's ideas from his prison days (starting in 1954) through the publication of his most famous book, *Milestones*,^[5] in the mid-1960s have no real connection to the Brotherhood's school of thought. The leadership of the Brotherhood, headed by second General Guide Hasan al-Hudaibi, has circulated academic and legal refutations of all major positions adopted by Qutb in a well-known book published under the General Guide's name, *Preachers, Not Judges*.^[6] However, the book never refers directly to Qutb, and the Brotherhood may be reluctant to publicly denounce him. He was executed in 1966 after being charged, along with other Brotherhood leaders, with conspiracy against the Egyptian regime. It would be highly awkward for the MB to officially disassociate itself from the writings of a man not only considered one of its greatest martyrs but one of the most important for the Islamist cause.

Relationship with the State

The current stage in the historical relationship between the political establishment and the Muslim Brotherhood is unprecedented. Both sides are attempting to rewrite the formula

⁷ The most prominent being the Pakistani Abu-l Aala al-Maududi.

that has governed their relationship since 1954. Ever since a cabal from the MB tried to assassinate President Gamal Abdel Nasser that year, the political establishment, through three successive presidents (Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak), has resolved to deny the legitimacy MB has sought since it was banned after the assassination attempt and subsequent clashes with the government. At the same time, the Egyptian state has never sought to liquidate the MB; most of the time, it has tolerated a limited, de facto MB presence in various arenas of political and civil society. It is clear that the MB has understood the implications of this formula. The government has consented to deal with the MB, while refusing to acknowledge the legitimacy of the group's existence. The MB has accordingly expended all its energies to take advantage of the occasional toleration of its de facto presence in society and in the political arena. Furthermore, the Brotherhood has committed itself both in theory and in practice to avoiding the use of violence in its social activism and political work, disavowing any calls to strike at the state. The Brotherhood continues to propagate its ideas and expand its base in all segments of society and even in certain sectors of the government. It is still trying to influence, participate in, and eventually come to rule the country's political processes, but without resorting to violence or force.

This formula now appears to have been amended by both sides, leading to the intensity of the current confrontation between the MB and the government. In March 2007, the political establishment added constitutional amendments that were intended to "outlaw" the MB, not only by prohibiting it from forming a political party, but by trying to keep it from political activism in general. The fifth article (which has been amended) provides the constitutional basis for excluding the MB on paper and in practice, while other articles exclude it from participating in future general elections in Egypt. Faced with this strategic change in the government's stance, the MB has resolved to change its side of the equation as well. For the first time since being outlawed in early 2008, the MB has decided to try to go beyond merely being tolerated (as per the traditional formula) to enjoying a lawful presence as a political party. Most likely, the primary factor behind the MB's demand to be recognized as a political party is the fear that the political establishment's new game plan (carried out via the constitutional amendments) will exclude, if not banish, it from the public sphere.

Both the Brotherhood and the government are trying to compose a new formula to replace the half-century-old one. Each side wants to maximize its interests and rid itself of its rival or at least minimize the other's ability to meet its own objectives.

A Political Party

Ever since the 1954 resolution banning the Muslim Brotherhood, the group has faced the dilemma of trying to gain legal recognition from the Egyptian state. Even though the MB has persevered as a major player on the Egyptian political scene for all these years, its

outlawed status has been a constant challenge. The MB's stance toward its legal dilemma has perceptibly changed over the last 25 years, passing through at least three separate stages. In the first phase beginning in the early 1980s, the MB filed a lawsuit before the administrative judiciary to annul the resolution outlawing the MB. This suit has still not been adjudicated and remains before the judiciary. This has not kept the Brotherhood from insisting that it is in the right and that one day a ruling will be passed down in its favor.

The second phase in this struggle for legal recognition began in 1996, when the Office of the General Guide issued a decree that the Muslim Brotherhood would present a formal request to the Committee of Political Parties in Egypt for the establishment of a new party. The Office of the General Guide appointed as its representative Abu Ila al-Madi, a Brotherhood member. The Office also appointed Muhammad Mahdi Akef, a member of the Office (who is now the current General Guide of the MB), to oversee this process. Nevertheless, several problems and obstacles impeded the Brotherhood's first attempt to establish a legitimate political party. Because of these issues, the MB withdrew its support for the Wasat (Moderate) Party, and withdrew its members' names from the list of Wasat founders. With a small band of close companions, Madi seceded from the Brotherhood. The platform of his new party, which has yet to secure official recognition despite three attempts, has become the special project for Madi and his cohorts, who include other ex-members of the Brotherhood. The MB's intention in forming a political party was not that it should replace the Brotherhood in the Egyptian political scene or be the sole representative of the Brothers. It was to use the party as a means to carry out the political work of the MB, which would remain the parent institution.⁸

Because of the crisis within the Wasat Party and a strong trend among the MB's leadership to be less than enthusiastic about forming a political party, discussions of party formation declined in the years that followed. Immediately after Muhammad Mahdi Akef was appointed the MB's General Guide on January 14, 2004, the third and current phase began. Akef began his tenure by issuing public statements expressing the organization's desire to form a political party. Since this was decreed by a General Guide, it was considered a precedent-making move and has been the MB's official position since.⁹ Akef and others from

⁸ There are many stories about the reasons behind the Brotherhood's withdrawal from the Wasat Party and Madi's secession from the group. Both sides agree that Madi submitted the party platform according to his own agenda, but each side maintains that it was subsequently abandoned by the other due to their differing expectations. The Wasat Party today is acknowledged as completely independent from the MB, as evinced by their sharp criticisms of each other.

⁹ A large part of the explanation for the reemergence of the Muslim Brotherhood and its increased political activity is due to the appointment of Mahdi Akef to the office of General Guide in January 2004, and his personal opinion that it is essential for the MB to actively engage in the political scene in order to reflect its ideology and identity. Akef launched the MB's initiative for political reform after only two months in office, confirming that he was the driving force of the party. The reason behind this important change in the orientation of the Brotherhood toward politics is due to its centralization and the strength of the leadership within the group.

the supreme leadership continued to demand a legal opening for the Brotherhood to obtain a legitimate political party. This demand was made clear at the MB's protests in 2005.

Most of the MB leadership and membership now support the idea of forming a political party. Nevertheless, the MB is caught in an internal debate: not over whether to form a political party, but whether this prospective party will be a means for the MB to carry out its public and political work, or if it will replace the Brotherhood entirely. There are several indications that the Brotherhood is internally divided along these lines, with the overwhelming majority of the older generation leaning toward a party in addition to the organization, which will act as the ultimate authority. A significant number of members from the second and third generations also lean toward this approach. Nearly all of those who support having the political party replace the organization come from the second and third generations.

Indeed, part of this internal disagreement may be attributed to the characteristics of the older generation and its personal experiences. Another part may be attributed to the practical situation the organization currently finds itself in, a situation whose roots spring from the concept originally put forth by the MB's founder, Hasan al-Banna. Conceptually speaking, al-Banna founded the Brotherhood as a comprehensive Islamic committee which would encompass, as he wrote, "a Salafi mission, a Sunni methodology, a Sufi reality, a political committee, an athletic association, an academic and cultural association, an economic corporation, and a social concept." The organization has indeed developed along these lines, and it continues to carry out all these functions three-quarters of a century later. It would be difficult to incorporate all of these functions within the activities of a political party; if the MB were replaced by a political party, it would be forced to abandon some of them. Additionally, since the 1940s, the MB has expanded in both the Arab and Muslim worlds to become an organization with branches in many countries. Its internal organizational structure has come to reflect its international bent, particularly in its supreme leadership committees, such as the Office of the General Guide and the General Consultative Assembly. If the MB were to become a purely political party, it would be forced to jettison this enormous structure and reorganize it along Egyptian lines, since Egyptian law prohibits its political parties from having foreign branches.¹⁰

¹⁰ From an organizational standpoint, according to the bylaws of the MB, the group continues to have an international character, wherein the General Guide in Egypt represents upper leadership in all three branches, and there are three deputies, two Egyptian and one Syrian. From an administrative standpoint, the branches must follow general and broad guidelines set forth by Egypt, but these branches have full authority to run their affairs in their own countries without interference from the central leadership. This is reaffirmed by the command structure within the group, which acts like a Guidance Bureau or Shura Council, and is comprised of only Egyptians, with no foreign members participating.

At present, the Muslim Brotherhood is confronted with several issues. It must resolve its positions on these issues as soon as possible and delineate its political stances in greater detail. Of the two issues that stand out as the most vital and complex, one is the relationship among the various generations within the Brotherhood. The other is the relationship between the leadership and membership in the urban centers versus those in the rural and semi-rural areas. This dichotomy represents the relationship between two distinct outlooks, where the former could be described as open minded, and the latter as more conservative.

The MB currently encompasses three main generations: the first are those who have participated in the organization since the 1940s and 1950s, whose average age is around 70 years. The second generation comprises those who joined the MB in the 1970s and 1980s, and whose average age is around 50 years. The third and current generation is comprised of those who joined in the 1990s, and are in their 20s and 30s. Generally speaking, it can be argued that the first generation is different and separate from the second and third, which are similar to each other in many respects.

After President Sadat was assassinated in October 1981, the tensions that had hung over Egypt during the last four years of his rule began to subside, and the members of the second generation set out to reestablish and rebuild the MB. By that time, they had graduated from college and entered respectable professions as doctors, lawyers, and engineers. In the nearly two decades that followed, this generation was able to achieve, both in Egyptian politics and the syndicates, which had never been achieved before in all of the MB's history. Above all else, this generation succeeded in recruiting the third generation through its activism in the organization, politics, media, and universities.

Although the first and second generations belong to the middle class from the urban and rural areas, they are quite different in their professional expertise and relationship to the state and other political actors. The first generation grew up politically conscious, joining the MB before or during the July 1952 revolution. At that time, the MB and other Egyptian national actors clashed with one another, despite agreeing on the need to end the British occupation. Members of that generation were barely in their 30s when the organization had its first set of bloody clashes with the government, which led to the loss of the MB's founder and first General Guide, Hasan al-Banna, in 1949. Only four years later, the same generation faced an even greater clash with the new revolutionary regime, which cost most of them 20 years of prison, self-imposed exile, forced exile, or exclusion from public life. This early and prolonged experience branded that generation with a troubled relationship with other opposition parties, and embedded in them doubts about the sincerity of these parties with regard to forming alliances. It also instilled in them a perpetual weariness of the government.

The second generation began its history with the MB while in college in the second half of the 1970s. In contrast to the first, members of this generation participated with their peers

from other political parties in forming a widespread student movement that was opposed to President Sadat's policies, particularly his foreign policy. This was managed despite several disputes among these groups that occasionally reached the level of outright clashing. Even though this generation of the Brotherhood was active in opposing the Egyptian state, it managed to stay away from prison and the state's iron fist, which had clamped down on the first generation. Given this different experience, the second generation, unlike its predecessor, did not have a strained relationship with the other opposition parties. Indeed, its relationship was good with those who had been their comrades in the political university movement of the 1970s. Similarly, the second generation did not share the same fear of the government, although it maintained a critical stance toward its makeup and its domestic and foreign policies.

The difference between the second generation and its predecessor becomes even starker when three vital factors are taken into account. First, the second generation interacted with the outside world and with both Islamist and non-Islamist activists. The first generation was not afforded the same opportunities in this regard. In particular, the first generation could not yet learn from the successes and failures of Islamist movements in Algeria, Iran, and Turkey. The second important factor is that the second generation's intellectual inspiration came from sources that emerged after the majority of the first generation's traditional intellectuals had passed away. The third factor is that the second generation's members and leaders engaged more with the media. Indeed, they were forced to deal on a regular basis with the general media, whose audience includes vast swaths of the Arab and Muslim masses. This has significantly shaped the form and content of their discourse and, consequently, their thought. By contrast, the first generation was accustomed to spreading its message only through its own publications and media with an Islamist bent.

A second important consideration in analyzing the internal affairs of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood is the relationship between the leadership and the membership of the MB in the urban centers as opposed to the leadership and membership in the rural and semi-rural areas. The MB conducts religious, educational, social, political, and economic activities. Because of this diversity in activities, some members devote themselves to activities related to the issue of conservatism, while others devote themselves to activities that have a more liberal bent.

After the Brotherhood's victory in the 2005 parliamentary elections, there were mounting calls from across the political spectrum for the MB to quickly form an open and legitimate political party. This prompted several reactions within the Brotherhood. The more conservative members harbor reservations regarding the MB's decree to form a party, preferring to keep the organization as the framework for the movement, which is the same organization to which they attribute their electoral victory. These members refuse to allow the MB

to be transformed into a political party, fearing that it will fall into the abyss of dismal failure that afflicted other legally recognized Egyptian political parties in the last elections.¹¹ Conversely, there is another trend calling for the formation of a political party to eventually replace the organization completely. Between these two positions, there is a compromise proposal to have a political party that is subordinate to the organization, which will have the last word over the party's direction.

Although the issue of a political party currently dominates the internal discussions of the MB, this does not mean that it is the sole issue that elicits opinions, ranging from the extremely conservative to the very liberal. Other issues, including the status of women and Christians and the priorities of implementing Islamic law—particularly the *hudud* punishments—are still debated. Nevertheless, the organization has generally been very open with the Egyptian political community since the elections, with a number of MB leaders and members submitting these internal debates for public discussion. This will most definitely prompt the MB to come up with more unified stances on these issues, stances that are most likely to be more liberal and moderate.

Egypt is the largest and arguably the most important Arab nation. It is imperative, if we are to understand its political life and future, that we adopt an empirical rather than a prejudiced understanding of the significant Islamist presence there. There can be no question that the Muslim Brotherhood has a vitality, richness, and variety that few in the West appreciate. It is also a vital part of the Egyptian political mind and life. To encourage or condone its repression by local elites on the mistaken assumption that it is something more dangerous than it is would be inviting greater political instability and the possibility that more extreme ideologies will fill any vacuum created by its repression.

¹¹ The accomplishment of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 2005 elections can be described as a great success, as the unexpected win of 20 percent of the votes and seats had never happened before in its history, nor in the history of any other Egyptian political force in the past 30 years. The Brotherhood was able to achieve this victory given its superior organizational capabilities and because the government did not expect it and therefore did not pressure it during the election season. In addition, it enjoyed major gains due to negative voting against the ruling National Democratic Party, which took votes away from the ruling party's majority. Another reason for the outcome was the fierce competition between the official opposition party and the official ruling party candidates and the weakness of the platform of the official opposition party.

Radicalization of Muslims in Mindanao: The Philippines in Southeast Asian Context

Amina Rasul

There is debate regarding the nature of the recent rise of Islamic sentiment and Islamist politics in Southeast Asia. Some see in it an expansion of extremist ideology or terrorist groups following the events of 9/11, and related to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Others maintain that extremists and/or terrorists are marginal to what is in fact a growing general interest in religion and a desire to bring Islam into the public sphere by infusing modern economic development and democracy with Islamic tenets and values. The first perspective ignores the plurality of Southeast Asian society as well as the plurality of Southeast Asian Muslims themselves, who base their identities on a complex mix of ethnic and religious elements. Painting all Southeast Asian Muslims as part of a “radicalization” process risks skewing any relationship the West would like to have with the region.

For Moro Muslims in Mindanao in the southern Philippines, the “war on terror” has compounded the conflict that has plagued the region for decades, in that it has allowed the government to label what is a long-fought push for autonomy as terrorist activities, fair game for counterterrorism campaigns. In actuality, the radicalization of Filipino Muslims, particularly those in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), finds its roots in a history of struggle against marginalization, poverty, and undemocratic regimes.

The conflict in Mindanao has killed scores of people and displaced more than half a million. A purely military solution to the insurgency, especially under the guise of the “war on terror,” will not bring peace to the region, nor will it bring a solution to the poverty, lack of education, and lack of human security that plagues it. Moreover, addressing Islamic radicalism solely from a hard security perspective has risk of creating more extremism. What is needed is an appreciation for the diversity within Southeast Asian society and among Muslims, and a better understanding of the issues specific to each instance of Muslim rebellion, such as the one in Mindanao. This paper analyzes the democratization process in Muslim Southeast Asia in the context of increased radicalization within the Muslim communities.

Islam in the Region

Home to over 500 million people, Southeast Asia comprises multiple ethnicities, cultures, and religions. Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar (Burma), Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam are predominantly Buddhist. Ancestor worship and Confucianism are also widely practiced in Vietnam. In the Malay Archipelago, people living in Brunei Darussalam, western Indonesia, and Malaysia mainly practice Islam. Christianity is predominant in eastern Indonesia, East Timor, and the Philippines. The Philippines has the largest Roman Catholic population in the region, followed very distantly by Vietnam. The countries of the region also display a range of political systems, including authoritarian, communist, democratic, and monarchical, all of which add to the regional diversity.

Muslims make up almost 50 percent of the regional population and can be found in all countries (see table 1). They are the majority in Malaysia; Brunei Darussalam, the only ruling monarchy in the region; and Indonesia, the world's largest Islamic state and fourth most populous country. They constitute significant minority populations in the democratic states of Cambodia, the Philippines, and Singapore; the communist regimes of Laos People's Democratic Republic and Vietnam; and of Thailand, a Buddhist constitutional monarchy. Muslim minorities live in East Timor, which is still building a parliamentary democratic political system following its independence from Indonesia in 2002. They also live in Myanmar (Burma), which has been ruled by a military junta since 1962.

Table 1: Muslim Population of Southeast Asia, 2006

Country	Total population (millions)	Muslim population (percentage)	Muslim population (millions)
Brunei Darussalam	0.4	67	0.3
Cambodia	13.3	7	0.9
East Timor	1	4	0.0
Indonesia	225.5	88	195.3
Laos	6.1	1	0.1
Malaysia	26.9	59	15.4
Myanmar (Burma)	51	15	7.6
Philippines	86.3	10	8.5
Singapore	4.5	16	0.7
Thailand	65.2	10	6.5
Vietnam	84.2	1	0.8
Total	564.4		236.0

Source: www.islamicpopulation.com.

In the West, interest in the influence of Islam in Southeast Asian has risen sharply since 9/11. This can be attributed mainly to the perception that Southeast Asia has become a major site of international and domestic terrorist activity, and that the causes of, and solutions to, terrorism are linked to Islamist politics in the region.^[1] However, this broad-brush approach to the issues obscures the various factors that underlie the Islamic revival. It is important to consider the interplay between the rise of individual religiosity and growing democratization. Regardless of nationality, Muslim communities in Southeast Asia are experiencing a resurgence and reassertion of Islamic identity that is fostering greater individual religiosity. At the same time, the region is undergoing a process of democratization that is increasingly giving voice to the masses and revealing alternative centers of power and legitimacy.

Since 9/11, an obstacle to democratization throughout the region has been the subordination of human security¹ to traditional security interests. “Law and order” has been privileged above other national goals. Human rights groups have protested that the war on terrorism provides a new pretext for sweeping internal security acts that can be used against citizens who engage in legal, peaceful dissent,^[2] and gives ailing Southeast Asian regimes new momentum to restore or increase draconian measures against local democratic opposition movements.

There are legitimate concerns that heightened religiosity, if not managed and channeled properly, could threaten the social and cultural pluralism that defines much of Southeast Asia. At the same time, it is equally important for policymakers to avoid viewing religiosity as a slippery slope leading only to extremism, violence, and terrorism. While militants in Pattani, southern Thailand, and in Mindanao, southern Philippines, exploit Islam to support their campaigns, Islamic organizations are also responsible for a range of peace- and community-building initiatives, such as health care, environmentalism, and expanding educational opportunities for all, including women.²

In Muslim majority states, Islam provides the basis of political legitimacy for the governments and their leaders. Southeast Asia is no exception: the governments of Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia are anchored in Islam, even as the former two strive to strengthen democratic spaces. In the Muslim minority communities of the Philippines and Thailand, there is an increasing demand from Muslim leaders for access to Islamic institutions such as

¹ Human security, as defined by the UN Institute for Disarmament Research, includes “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”: “Often referred to as ‘people-centered security’ or ‘security with a human face,’ human security places human beings—rather than states—at the focal point of security considerations. Human security emphasizes the complex relationships and often-ignored linkages between disarmament, human rights, and development.” Source: www.unidir.org/html/en/human_security.html; accessed January 25, 2009.

² Two examples of this are Muhammadiyah and Nadatul Ulama of Indonesia, the two largest Muslim organizations in the world.

shariah (Islamic law), *madaris* (Islamic schools), and *halal* practices (permitted by Islam) for food and services. For example, Muslim liberation groups in Mindanao have negotiated successfully for the implementation of *shariah* (although limited to personal and family laws) and *madaris* in the ARMM.³ While these are available to Muslims, they are not imposed on citizens of other faiths.^[3]

Southeast Asian Muslims are generally regarded as more moderate in character than their Middle Eastern counterparts, in part because Islam came to the region through traders rather than conquerors, and overlaid strong animist, Hindu, and Buddhist traditions.^[4] While the majority of Southeast Asian Muslims are pluralistic, tolerant, and comfortable living under secular governments, there are communities that prefer a more fundamentalist system, closer to the conservative practice of Islam in countries such as Saudi Arabia. This diversity within the Muslim community is the result of the interaction between Islam and political, ethnic, and territorial issues which vary greatly across the region. Further, the aggressive Wahhabi proselytizing campaign funded by oil-rich Saudi Arabia, spread through mosques, schools, and Islamic social welfare organizations, has brought this fundamentalist form of Islam to many Muslim communities.^[5]

Scholars generally agree that Muslims in Southeast Asia have gone through a long process of Islamization. Understanding this process is important in determining the current face of Islam in the region and understanding the nature of the radicalization of some of its population.

Radicalization and Democratization

There are two narratives regarding the rise of Islamism in Southeast Asia.⁴ The first perpetuates the exaggerated account that Islamist extremists and terrorists have come to dominate the political terrain of Muslim Southeast Asia since 9/11. According to this school of thought, Muslims in Southeast Asia are increasingly embracing extremist religious interpretations that are largely militant in character. The second school of thought challenges

³ According to the 2000 census, 5.1 percent of the total population is Muslim (4 million). However, this is contested by Muslim groups, which estimated the Muslim population to be from 8 to 12 percent (US State Department, *International Religious Freedom Report 2004*). Two and a half million Muslims live in Mindanao, which is the second largest island group in the Philippines. Its 23 provinces are now home to roughly a quarter of the country's population. The ARMM is the region of the Philippines, created by virtue of the Republic Act 6734 in 1989, composed of all the predominantly Muslim provinces: Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, and Marawi City, popularly known as "the Islamic City of Marawi." Despite this act, the government and insurgent groups have continued to clash in Mindanao. A peace agreement was signed between the government and the Moro National Liberation Front in 1996, but conflict continues.

⁴ While the term is controversial, "Islamism" is used here as "a set of ideologies holding that Islam is not only a religion but also a political system; that modern Islam must return to their roots of their religion, and unite politically."

this narrative. One scholar recently argued that Muslim leaders in Southeast Asia are blending Islamic traditions and thought with modern economic development and democracy in an increasingly effective fashion. As a result, extremism—in particular violent *jihād*—appears to be on a downward trend.^[6]

Another scholar, British political scientist John Sidel, argues that the influence of radical Islam in the region's politics has recently decreased significantly. This, he contends, is the reason a small minority has resorted to terroristic activities. “The turn towards terrorist violence by small numbers of Islamist militants,” Sidel writes, “must be understood as a symptom of a reaction to the decline, domestication and disentanglement from state power of Islamist forces in the region.”^[7]

Unfortunately, the first narrative has dominated discussions on Southeast Asian Islam, and has created what many have called the “horrorist” account of the radicalization of Muslims in the region. This school of thought has deeply influenced many security and policy analysts, especially those from the West. With the attacks on the United States in 2001, the fall of the Taliban government in Afghanistan, the war in Iraq, the Bali bombings in Indonesia, and the series of bombings in the Philippines in October 2002, Southeast Asia has become known as the second front of the “war on terror.” The arrests of dozens of alleged al-Qaeda operatives in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Singapore and the presence of groups such as the Jemaah Islamiah (JI), Abu Sayyaf, Laskar Jihad, and the Kumpulan Mujahideen Malaysia (KMM) seemed to the US-led coalition to be indicative of a new conglomerate of “terrorists,” a new “axis of evil” bent upon the destruction of Western targets.^[8]

While there can be no denying that there is a process of radicalization in the moderate and pluralistic Southeast Asian communities, it is important to stress that radical does not necessarily mean violent. There is a spectrum of actions that fall under the term “radical.” The willingness to use or justify violence to attain religious or political objectives is one element that separates violent extremists from other radical Muslims.^[9] This is an important distinction. It is equally important to differentiate between insurgency and terrorism. Terrorists deliberately and systematically target civilians in pursuit of nonnegotiable goals, and score relatively low on the other two indexes, reflecting their lack of legitimacy. Insurgent movements with negotiable demands, political infrastructure, popular constituencies, and territorial control are less likely to depend on terrorist tactics and are more readily held to account for their actions, especially when engaged in peace processes.^[10] The Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), insurgent groups in Mindanao that are discussed later, are examples of this.

The radicalization of Muslim communities is rooted in the need to survive, both physically and culturally, and has been shaped by reaction to the impact of the “intrusive West.” This perceived intrusion, couched in terms of modernization and globalization, may have

brought technology, profitable trade, and economic development, but the rural and urban poor protest that they have not benefited. The gap between rich and poor has widened, and globalization is seen as a threat to a people's identity and culture, an imposition of Western "decadent," consumption-oriented market values that disregard and destroy traditional values. Modernization can be traumatic, particularly if forced and hasty, and the transformation away from tradition puts societies under deep stress. In this sense, Muslim communities are radicalizing in proportion to their failure to "modernize" themselves relative to their environments.^[11]

Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) secretary general Surin Pitsuwan notes that while Muslims need to know how to compete in an open society, they also need to be able to preserve their Islamic identity. While Southeast Asia is generally moderate, tolerant, and inclusive, and has seen great economic growth while enjoying relative political stability, this growth has been too fast for social institutions to adapt to or control. It has benefited some while marginalizing others, and has created a development gap in many countries. The situation is worse in areas such as southern Thailand and Muslim Mindanao, where Muslims have not participated in the growth process. For example, profits from the exploitation of natural resources in these areas have mostly benefited the capital towns, while increasing the cost of living in the local host communities.

In this age of globalization and information technology, the US-led military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq and the Abu Ghraib debacle have fed suspicions among Southeast Asian Muslims that Western (primarily US) authorities are deliberately targeting Muslims. Predictably, local Muslims have responded to this perceived threat within a spectrum of radicalization that includes everything from more public displays of personal piety and greater assertion of religious identity to outright violence and terrorism.^[12]

Islam in the Philippines

Seafaring Muslim traders introduced Islam in the southern Philippines in the 14th century. In the 15th and early 16th centuries, four ethnic Moro states emerged in the southern Philippines:⁵ the sultanates of Sulu and Maguindanao, the Bauyan Sultanate, and the Apatana Pangampong (the four principalities of Lanao). Each sultanate was independent, had sovereign power, and diplomatic and trade relations with other countries in the region; however, they were linked by their common religion, and shared customs and traditions, and through intermarriages among the royal families.

When the Spanish arrived in 1521, Muslims, through the sultanates discussed above, governed most of the islands. Spanish forces pushed the Muslims to Mindanao, the seat of the

⁵ The Moro are indigenous inhabitants of the Philippines and comprise numerous ethnicities and languages.

sultanates where resistance against Spain was strongest. The Spanish colonization and the continued existence of the sovereign Islamic sultanates ushered in the parallel historical development between the Muslims and the colonized, Christianized Filipinos in the north. It is crucial to note that the Spanish government recognized the sovereignty of the sultanates and entered into treaty arrangements with them.⁶ Even when the sultanates were at their weakest, the Spanish government respected the treaty arrangements.

When Spain turned the Philippines over to the United States in 1898, in essence it ceded what it did not own. The Muslim sultanates waged wars against American colonization, but were forced to retreat once again. The American government followed the Spanish strategy and also entered into treaties with the Muslim sultanates, successfully neutralizing the wars with a combination of force and political negotiations.⁷

As the American government prepared to give independence to the Philippines, Muslim chieftains gathered on March 18, 1935, in Dansalan (now Marawi City) and petitioned the US president not to include them in the new republic. The Muslims preferred to remain under US rule, recognizing that they would become second-class citizens if made part of the Catholic Philippines. Their petition was ignored. The Catholic majority gained their independence and control over the Muslim territories.

The inauguration of the Filipino republic therefore presented a paradox. On the one hand, it was able to establish a state and a semblance of an identity. On the other hand, while the new republic tried to consolidate its newly found sovereignty, the Moros, who had nothing in common with the Christianized Filipinos, tilted toward independence instead of integration. Animosity defined the relationship between the Muslims and the Christians because of wars waged by the sultanates against the Spanish colonial government, who used Christianized natives to fight the Muslims. This historically parallel development of the Christian-dominant Filipino nation and the insulated Muslim sultanates gave the rebellion its ideological character: the Muslim insurgents called for the realization of a separate Moro nation in contradistinction with that of the Christianized Filipino nation.^[13] The ideology of the Moro rebellion has always maintained that the Moro nation has to be separate from the Philippine nation because it was illegally annexed to the Christian-dominant Filipino nation.

⁶ Examples of treaties with the Sultan of Sulu include these: 1646 treaty of peace with Sultan Nasir ud-Din, 1737 bilateral alliance treaty with Sultan Alim I that provided for permanent peace in the region, 1754 peace treaty with Sultan Muiz ud-Din, 1851 treaty with Sultan Mohammad Pulalun surrendering his sovereign rights (contested by the historian Saleeby who pointed out turning over its sovereignty is not in the Tausug version of the treaty), 1878 treaty with Sultan Jamal ul-Alam making Sulu a protectorate of Spain but retaining sovereignty. Source: C. A. Majul, *Muslim in the Philippines* (Manila: University of the Philippines, 1999).

⁷ On August 20, 1899, the Bates Treaty, which would uphold mutual respect between the United States and the Sultanate of Sulu and respect Moro autonomy, was signed.

In addition, the Moro sultanates ruled for 500 years, the longest of any group in the history of the Philippines. This provides proof of early attempts at state formation and nation building by Muslims. Islam, therefore, stands on record as responsible for the first political institution, the first institutional religion, the first educational system, and the first civilization in the Philippines. This claim is the historic underpinning of the current liberation movements of the Moro Muslims in Mindanao.

The Current Economic, Social, and Political Predicament of the Bangsamoro

The term Bangsamoro (the Moro People) generally refers to the 13 ethnolinguistic Muslim tribes in the Philippines (Maranao, Maguindanao, Tausug, Yakan, Iranun, Sama, Badjao, Kalibugan, Kalagan, Sangil, Palawani, Molbog, and Jamamapun), which, according to contested census data, comprise less than 5 percent of the Philippine population and around 15 percent of the population in Mindanao. The government's Office of Muslim Affairs estimates the Muslim population to be at least 8 percent of the total population and protested the undercounting by the National Census Office (see table 2). The Moros are currently settled in western and southern Mindanao, Sulu, and in southern Palawan.

“Moro,” Spanish for “Moor,” was considered a derogatory term until adopted by the MNLF as the political identity of the Muslim tribes. The Bangsamoro have distinct cultures, speak different languages, and are varied in their social formation, but share a common belief in Islam. In contrast, Muslim converts, or “Balik-Islam,” do not consider themselves Bangsamoro.⁸

⁸ Balik-Islam (those who have returned to Islam) identify themselves as “reverts” because they say that Islam was the religion of their forefathers before Spain Christianized the archipelago. Thus, they are returning to the faith of their ancestors.

Table 2: Distribution of Muslim Population by Ethnic Group and Region, 2000

Region	Maguindanao						Total
	Maranao	Maguindanao	Tausug	Yakan	Iranun	Other	
Data from the National Census Office Census of Population and Housing							
Non-Mindanao (%)	5.04	1.45	2.34	0.33	1.21	20.96	5.52
Mindanao (%)	94.96	98.55	97.66	99.67	98.79	79.04	94.48
Number (thousands)	1,036	1,008	918	155	154	583	3,854
Data from the Office of Muslim Affairs							
Non-Mindanao (%)	23.82	19.02	17.58	32.01	29.75	45.93	26.25
Mindanao (%)	76.18	80.98	82.33	67.99	70.25	54.07	73.74
Number (thousands)	2,334	2,011	1,504	732	357	1,411	8,349

Over the last decade, both poverty and armed conflict in the ARMM have propelled hundreds of thousands of peaceful Muslims to leave the area and establish communities outside Muslim Mindanao, or to leave the country. The Muslim diaspora is spread all over the Philippines, with a tiny mosque now ensconced in each province and city. The Office of Muslim Affairs estimates that over 2 million Muslims now live outside Mindanao. The largest community is in the metro Manila region, where Muslim traders have become visible in the pearl and DVD trades.

Recent available data on the number of Balik-Islam in the Philippines indicate that it is a rapidly growing phenomenon. While they may be denominated as converts to Islam, without exception, none wants to be called a convert. They insist on being designated as Balik-Islam rather than converts. The Office of Muslim Affairs estimates that at least 20,000 Balik-Islam, or “reverts” as they like to be called, live in traditionally Catholic Luzon.

The specific character of armed Muslim rebellion in the Philippines is rooted in their struggle for sovereignty, first against the colonialism of the Spanish and then the Americans, and later against “colonization” by the newly independent Philippine government itself. The MNLF and the MILF, which have both fought for independence of the Moro nations, share a strong ethnic identity permeated by Islam and nurtured by centuries-old resentment about stolen sovereignty, subjugation, and marginalization.^[14]

Further, the Moro insurgency is a fight against the oppressive poverty and lack of development of the Muslim communities in Mindanao. The historical details therefore underpin the elements of what is known as the “Bangsamoro Problem,” although Muslims prefer to call it the “Manila Problem.” The elements of the Bangsamoro/Manila Problem can be understood in the following contexts.

Economic Marginalization and Poverty

Muslim Mindanao has been described as the poorest of the poor. Indeed, human development indicators clearly show that ARMM lags behind the rest of the Philippines in almost every aspect of development. The Human Development Index (HDI) in three separate years (1997, 2000, and 2003) shows that while Lanao del Sur improved slightly, the four other ARMM provinces have been stuck at the lowest levels of HDI in the entire country (see table 3).

Political Domination and Minoritization

As minorities in a predominantly Christian nation, the Moros feel the need to defend their identities both as Moros and as Muslims. This fear has become more pronounced since the events of 9/11. Not only are the Muslims a demographic minority, they are also underrepresented in national political institutions. Ideally, minorities can defend their rights through

Table 3: Bottom 10 Provinces in HDI Ranking, 1997, 2000, and 2003

1997		2000		2003	
Province	HDI	Province	HDI	Province	HDI
<i>Sulu</i>	0.336	<i>Sulu</i>	0.351	<i>Sulu</i>	0.301
<i>Lanao del Sur</i>	0.415	<i>Tawi-Tawi</i>	0.390	<i>Maguindanao</i>	0.360
<i>Maguindanao</i>	0.416	<i>Basilan</i>	0.425	<i>Tawi-tawi</i>	0.364
<i>Tawi-Tawi</i>	0.430	<i>Maguindanao</i>	0.461	<i>Basilan</i>	0.409
<i>Basilan</i>	0.439	<i>Ifugao</i>	0.461	<i>Masbate</i>	0.442
<i>Ifugao</i>	0.452	<i>Lanao del Sur</i>	0.464	<i>Zamboanga del Norte</i>	0.446
<i>Lanao del Norte</i>	0.470	<i>Agusan del Sur</i>	0.482	<i>Sarangani</i>	0.448
<i>Agusan del Sur</i>	0.482	<i>Samar</i>	0.511	<i>Western Samar</i>	0.469
<i>Samar</i>	0.493	<i>Lanao del Norte</i>	0.512	<i>Eastern Samar</i>	0.474
<i>Sarangani</i>	0.494	<i>Sarangani</i>	0.516	<i>Lanao del Sur</i>	0.480

Source: Rasul, *Broken Peace?*

Note: Muslim-dominant provinces are in italics.

democratic processes and institutions. Unfortunately, Muslims and other minorities in the Philippines have even been denied participation in electoral processes.

The persistent and recurring problem of electoral fraud orchestrated by national political leaders has defined elections in the ARMM. The high illiteracy and poverty levels, prevalence of armed conflict, weak media presence, and struggling civil society have made it easy for political operators to manipulate the elections. During the May 2007 national elections, local and foreign observers in the ARMM witnessed anomalies, such as election-related violence, statistically improbable electoral outcomes, vote buying, wholesale vote padding, and padding of the voters' lists, indicated by massive increases in voting populations in the region.^[15] The commissioner in charge of Muslim Mindanao, Virgilio Garcillano, was accused by opposition leaders of directly manipulating the elections for President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. A taped conversation between them, known as the "Hello Garci tapes," in which he can be heard assuring the president of results, was widely aired. When congressional hearings on the matter were held, Garcillano went missing for several months.

This lack of genuine political participation and representation has an impact on the allocation of resources. Without a significant number of leaders of national stature to lobby for adequate budgets, the Muslim provinces lag behind in the allocation of fiscal resources. Looking at budget appropriations, the ARMM fares poorly when compared with other regions. The Analysis of the President's 2005 Budget, prepared by the Congressional Planning and Budget Department of the House of Representatives, noted that the ARMM

received comparatively less in terms of regional allocation from 1992 to 2002. The figures for 2002, in fact, show that it received the lowest allocation of all, only 3 percent of the total.^[16]

Discrimination

Another catalyzing force for radicalization and extremism among Filipino Muslims is anti-Muslim bias, which has caused exclusion of the minority from economic development, education, jobs, and business opportunities. A 2006 survey showed that a third of Filipinos have a negative opinion of Muslims. A 2007 survey, commissioned by the United Nations, showed that 55 percent of Filipinos think “Muslims are prone to run amok,” 47 percent think “Muslims are terrorists or extremists,” and 44 percent believe that Muslims “harbor hatred toward non-Muslims.”^[17] The 2005 *Philippine Human Development Report* (PHDR) revealed that a considerable percentage (between 33 and 39 percent) of Filipinos are biased against Muslims.^[18] The PHDR further states that 46 percent of the Christian population would prefer to hire Christian male workers, and 40 percent would prefer Christian female domestic helpers. Only 4 percent would prefer to hire a Muslim male worker and 7 percent Muslim female domestic helpers.^[19] Clearly, discrimination affects access to opportunities.^[20]

Moro Resistance and Mobilization

The Moro National Liberation Front

The worst episode of Muslim-Christian conflict in the Philippines was carried out by the administration of then-president Ferdinand Marcos. In March 1968, at least 28 Moro army recruits were killed in the infamous Jabidah massacre on the island of Corregidor. The training was in preparation for Philippine military operations to invade Sabah, Malaysia, an area claimed by the Sultanate of Sulu. Moros viewed this operation as an attempt to provoke war between Sulu and Sabah, both Muslim regions. According to a Senate exposé initiated by then-senator Benigno Aquino, military authorities ordered the entire company killed because they rebelled against their military handlers. The authorities wanted to ensure that none could survive in order to expose the plan. However, one escaped and told all to Senator Aquino.

The exposed massacre provided a focal point for Muslim secessionists. Marcos declared martial law to deal with this and other threats to the state. This declaration became the impetus for Muslim groups to come together to defend themselves against the state’s military operations, which were perceived to be a move to eliminate the Muslims. Consequently, in the early 1970s the MNLF was organized under the leadership of Nurullaji Misuari, a professor at the University of the Philippines.

Armed conflict between the government of the Republic of the Philippines and the MNLF officially ended with the signing of the Final Peace Agreement (FPA) on September 2, 1996. The agreement was welcomed by millions of Mindanaoans, tired from decades of strife.

Twelve years later, the FPA has not delivered the promised peace, and both sides have accused each other of bad faith in its implementation. Armed conflict has broken out between some groups of the MNLF and the Philippine military. In fact, MNLF chair Nur Misuari was arrested in 2001 on a charge of rebellion and was only released on bail this year. As rebellion is a nonbailable crime, the question arises as to why it took the Philippine government seven years to determine that the evidence against Misuari was weak. The conflicts between the MNLF groups and the government, amidst mounting criticism of the poor implementation of the 1996 FPA,⁹ has forced the Organization of Islamic Conference to step in and facilitate a tripartite review of the implementation of the FPA. The results of the review process will be released shortly.¹⁰

Moro Islamic Liberation Front

The Moro Islamic Liberation Front was organized by the late Ustadz Salamat Hashim, who broke away from the MNLF hierarchy because of ideological differences and leadership squabbles with Misuari. In 1983, Hashim announced the separate presence of the MILF.

The MILF, dominated by the Maguindanaons (one of the ethnolinguistic Moro tribes), asserts an Islamic ideology that is distinct from the more secular tendency of the MNLF. The MILF is currently the largest Muslim secessionist group in the country, with membership conservatively estimated at between 15,000 and 20,000. Its original objective was to secede from the Philippine Republic and transform Mindanao into an independent Islamic state. MILF rebels are largely distributed in central Mindanao, particularly in the provinces of Maguindanao and Lanao del Sur, and to a lesser extent in western Mindanao.

The Philippine government, under former president Fidel V. Ramos, initiated negotiations for peace with the MILF. A government panel was created to explore terms with the MILF in September 1996, and meetings were held to discuss cessation of hostilities. The agenda included the following issues: ancestral domain, displaced and landless Bangsamoro, destruction of property, war victims, human rights issues, social and cultural discrimination, corruption, economic inequities, and widespread poverty.

⁹ According to the MNLF commanders who have gone back to the jungles of Sulu, the government has violated the FPA, thus justifying their return to conflict.

¹⁰ According to Randolph Parcasio, chair of the MNLF panel for tripartite review.

Former president Joseph Estrada later broke off negotiations and declared an all-out-war policy against the MILF, resulting in the displacement of some 500,000 to 800,000 Muslim civilians in central Mindanao in 2000. The government's decision to give up peaceful negotiations in favor of military action was widely criticized by Mindanao leaders, civil society, and the Catholic Church.

The peace negotiations between the government and the MILF, which started in 1996 after the signing of the agreement with the MNLF, resulted in an agreement on ancestral domain (the Moro claim on the land that they occupy, including the right to control their own economic resources and govern themselves). Facilitated by Malaysia, the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) was scheduled for a high-profile signing ceremony on August 5, 2008, in Kuala Lumpur. The MOA-AD contains general principles concerning, among others things, Bangsamoro identity and rights, the establishment of a genuine self-governance system appropriate for them, the areas to be placed under this self-governance system, and the protection and utilization of resources found therein. Unfortunately, the Philippine government withdrew its support for the MOA-AD, and the signing did not take place.

In response to the petition of Christian local government officials to stop the signing of the MOA-AD, the US Supreme Court issued a restraining order on August 4, a day before the MOA-AD was to be signed in Kuala Lumpur. Fighting erupted less than 24 hours after. On October 14, the Supreme Court declared the MOA-AD unconstitutional. From August 4 to October 14, more than 100 people were killed, and over 600,000 civilians became internally displaced. The government washed its hands of the MOA-AD, disbanding the government negotiating panel.

A closer look at the Moro insurgency in the Philippines has shown that the conflict in Mindanao, while it can be seen through a religious lens, has few parallels with global Islamist *jihadist* ideologies and movements. It is clear that the liberation movements remain focused on their struggle for self-determination and are therefore primarily local. Those looking at the conflict in the southern Philippines should therefore be very cautious about taking its religious character out of the context of the specific historical, political, and ethnic issues that underpin the conflict, or the local struggles and politics that structure it.^[21]

Conclusion

The radicalization of Muslim communities in the Philippines must be understood in the context of the process of democratization. After years of dictatorial rule, the country transitioned to a democracy after a “people-power” revolution ousted Ferdinand Marcos in 1986. This democratic transition and attempts at consolidating it have become problematic at best. Democratic institutions remain weak, electoral democracy continues to be fragile,

and social inequality persists. This is especially true with the ARMM. The democratic deficits experienced by the ARMM are a microcosm of the problematic democracy of the entire country.

Existing US policies and strategies seem to be fanning the fire of extremism rather than arresting it. The Philippine experience with its Muslim rebellion shows that a military solution is not enough to neutralize radicalism. A security-based approach to the problem will be at best ineffective and at worst counterproductive, given the West's lack of appreciation for the diversity of Islamic movements in Southeast Asia and its disregard for their underlying roots.^[22] If a military solution did not work in the past, what strategy can best neutralize the growing radicalization of Muslims in the Philippines and other conflict-affected communities in Southeast Asia?

Over the last three years, roundtables organized by civil society¹¹ in the ASEAN countries have analyzed the situation and proposed the following recommendations:

- Build a strong coalition of partners and provide them with support. Partnering with Muslim communities is probably the best way to counter or prevent extremists from accessing widespread audiences. These partners must be able to facilitate dialogue between the militants and government, bridge the gap between the Muslim community and the government, and truly represent the needs of the Muslim communities they claim to represent.
- Help the silent majority of progressive and moderate Muslims gain the upper hand in the contest for Muslim hearts and minds. Central to this task is creating a strong international network to unite the fractured voices of moderate Muslims. Southeast Asia is unique in the Muslim world in that there is already in place a dense structure of moderate Muslim institutions. Such institutions can be instrumental in developing and disseminating a moderate narrative that contradicts the radical narrative.
- Governments need to support a justice system and economic development that will benefit the masses. For the majority of Muslims in the region, poverty is a major problem, particularly in Cambodia, Indonesia, and Mindanao. The conflict zones in Southeast Asia are rich in natural resources, but remain poor and underdeveloped. The extraction of these resources by foreign investors or nonlocal businesses poses a conflict of interest as to who benefits from the riches.

¹¹ Examples are the regional conferences organized by the Philippine Council for Islam and Democracy (PCID) and its ASEAN partners: "Islam and Democratization in Southeast Asia: Prospects and Challenges" and "The Radicalization of Muslim Communities in Southeast Asia," both organized by PCID in 2005; 3rd Regional Conference: Islam and Democracy, March 20–22, 2006, Institute of Study of Ummah and Global Understanding, Kuala Lumpur; "Democracy and Democratization: Challenges and Prospects in Southeast Asia," December 5–7, 2005, International Center for Islam and Pluralism, Jakarta.

- Support homegrown democracy building. It is critical to show that Islam is a source of democratic values. Whether the twin forces of radicalization and democracy will ultimately collide or coexist, and whether democratic conditions can integrate Islamists into plural social and political structures, remains to be seen.²³
- There is a need to be sensitive to the diverse historical and cultural contexts of Muslim communities in the region. While democracy and Islam may be compatible, the kind of democracy the region adopts should be specific to the needs and aspirations of the Islamic communities concerned. In attempting to make sense of these contexts, it is critical that one distinguish between Islam as a moral creed and ethical code—seen by the vast majority of Muslims as necessary to govern everyday life—and Islam as a clarion call to arms from a small majority on the fringes. The corollary to this is the need to support Muslim schools, both private and public, to provide not just religious and Arabic training but worldly skills and knowledge as well. However, governments should be aware of Muslim sensitivities before attempting to design a policy affecting the way Muslims practice their faith. By formally recognizing the *madrasah*'s contribution to the society and affording the same respect to this institution as do Muslims, the government can unlock doors and move toward forging greater understanding and cooperation with the Muslim community.
- There is a need to better understand the character of the radicalization of Muslims in the region. The problem cannot be addressed by myopic strategies that further isolate Islam and Muslims. As a major religion with about 230 million adherents in Southeast Asia, Islam will remain a vital socioreligious, sociocultural, and political force that contributes directly or indirectly to regional stability. It is crucial to recognize and support the potential of Islam to become a civilizing force for peace, stability, progress, harmony, and prosperity.²⁴

Those interested in the Southeast Asian region must realize that Muslims view global events through a particularistic lens (as do other local peoples in the world). It is therefore imperative for everyone—analysts, media, or governments—to have a proper appreciation for the specific national and ethnic contexts that shape this world view. Yet, despite the diverse nature and expression of political Islam in Southeast Asia, it should also be clear that, whatever the national and local context, Islam is gaining strength politically and will likely remain a major point of reference for Muslims in Southeast Asia who are seeking to locate their place in a rapidly modernizing and globalizing world.

Role of Religion in Afghan Politics: Evolution and Key Trends

Prakhar Sharma

Afghanistan faces a serious crisis of political stability, threatening its modest development gains, the survival of its government, and the interests of the West and the international community. In order to meet these challenges, the country will need broad social unity and should therefore avoid alienating important bodies of opinion wherever possible. Integrating religious leadership into the political mainstream is essential to the viability and stability of the country's continued transition into a free and democratic political order. Equally important is to give religious practice an outlet in other aspects of public life, such as education.

Interviews with locals in six different provinces including Kabul, indicate a growing frustration with the government's lack of effort in integrating religious leaders into the political process.^[1] Showing respect for Islam can play a key role in building political legitimacy in a country whose population is overwhelmingly Muslim. *Madrassas*, or religious schools, are also a contentious issue. There is a concern in Afghanistan and among its Western supporters, that *madrassas* could be fostering antidemocratic or even terrorist ideologies. However, several nationwide surveys conducted during the last three years reveal the importance that the populace accords to education^[2] and the accepted prevalence of religion in education.

The international community, in showing its support to Afghanistan's government and the country's developmental process, must recognize the importance of Islam for the Afghan population and encourage its inclusion in the political process and in the formal educational system. However, it must also be careful not to be seen as interfering in religious matters, as this risks inflaming public sentiment. This paper examines recent trends in the role of religion in Afghan statecraft and in the context of broader political developments in the country. The paper also attempts to explain the historical evolution of the relationship between the state and religion.

Background

The last nationwide population census in Afghanistan was done in 1979, but current unofficial estimates put the Sunni population at around 80 percent of the total, with Shi'as

making up the rest (including a small minority of Ismailis comprising a few thousand people in the northeastern provinces). There are only tiny numbers of Sikhs, Hindus, and Zoroastrians living in the country. Afghan society is religiously conservative, and rulers have traditionally maintained close relations with the clergy. Rulers who instituted reforms that were seen as un-Islamic by the clerics and society often lost their popular support. Thus, the current administration of President Hamid Karzai has been wary of putting a secular face to the government. It has especially taken care to appear sensitive about protection of *madrassas* and shrines.

Some efforts were made early in the current peace process to include religious voices in politics. In 2001, the role of the religious establishment was formally recognized by its inclusion in the Bonn meeting that articulated the plan for governing the country following the ousting of the Taliban by the United States. In 2002, President Karzai reorganized the Shura-e Ulama (a council of religious scholars that advises on *sharia* law and other matters) and asked it to issue a religious edict that invalidated the Taliban's call for holy war against international coalition forces and the Afghan government. Since then, the engagement of religious figures in elections (2004) and constitutional arrangements (2005) has continued.

When he came to power in 2002, President Karzai inherited the *madrassas* that were built during the pre-Soviet and Taliban periods. In addition to these, the new government established a few *madrassas* as “an essential counterweight to the privately run *madrassas*,” in spite of intense pressure from the international community to refrain from doing so.^[3]

The role played by the Iranian and Pakistani *madrassas* in the Afghan resistance against the Soviet Union shaped the state policy in Afghanistan toward religion and its role in politics. The government was concerned that private *madrassas* in Afghanistan would proliferate through funds and charities in the country, as well as from individuals and groups abroad. Certain segments of the Karzai administration also believed that Afghan religious scholars were radicalized in *madrassas* in neighboring countries, especially in Pakistan and Iran. These segments of the administration felt the best way to stem the prospect of militant tendencies was to establish peaceful religious institutions domestically, thus minimizing the need for Afghans to go abroad for religious education.^[4]

Key Trends in Politics

Historically, several broad trends can be described. Several of them reflect the political and social realities of various periods during the last century, with the influence of religion in Afghanistan's politics declining steadily until the Soviet invasion, resurging during the *jihad* against the Soviets, and receding after the ouster of the Taliban.

The Changing Role of Ulama in Society

During most of the 20th century, there was a gradual erosion of the influence of the *Ulama* (legal scholars of Islam and the *sharia*). However, this trend has been reversed during the last three decades, largely because of ongoing conflicts.^[5] Historically, the central governments in Kabul have kept both the tribal leaders and the religious figures at arm's length and tried to limit or undermine their influence. The role of religious scholars and their influence, however, increased exponentially with the *jihad* against the Soviets and the subsequent civil war among the *mujahideen* factions and the Taliban regime. During each of these phases, religious preachers provided legitimacy to actions that often sanctioned violence in the name of Islam. During the last six years, however, because of the dependence of the government on the support from the international community, and Western nations in particular, the role of religious figures has declined. The current administration has done little, if anything, to seriously integrate the religious leaders into the political process. This is largely because of the Western world's apprehension of the link—both perceived and demonstrated—between religious education and violent extremism.

Historically, most local disputes in Afghanistan have been resolved by local elders, other influential figures, and religious leaders. The parties who played a role in this process, however, changed over the last 30 years, as the roles for commanders, warlords, and drug lords expanded, and the role of religious leaders declined during the last few years. During the period of Taliban rule and the enforcement of *sharia* law, the role and influence of religious leaders in resolving disputes expanded, followed by a decline since 2002.

The recent secularization of the legal system and establishment of a professional organization to administer law has also sometimes deprived the independent *Ulama* of their legal responsibilities.^[6] While the formal (Western style) justice system is in its infancy in Afghanistan, and several provinces do not yet have any formal legal presence outside of the provincial capitals, the government remains committed to making the system more secular. In many districts, people still prefer to resolve their disputes through tribal or informal means that include approaching the *Ulama*. Thus, change has been more at the policy level and largely in the cities, where there is a viable formal judicial system.

Rift between Religious Figures and the Government

The active role that *mullahs* (Islamic clerics) played in the Taliban government led the Karzai administration and the international community to view them with concern. The *mullahs* are seen as pro-Taliban, or “extremists” whose views are incompatible with the ideals of democracy, freedom, and the integration of Afghanistan into the international community. Thus, they are often sidelined in major political developments, and this greatly frustrates them.^[7]

The continuous rise in violence in Afghanistan has also decreased the space for those religious leaders who take moderate positions on issues. Over the last three years, several *mullahs* have been killed in Afghanistan and Pakistan, on the pretext that they were pro-government and anti-Taliban. At the same time, the government has also allegedly taken measures against *mullahs* who were antigovernment. The marginalization of the religious leaders, along with the government's inability to offer them protection, contributes to the widening gulf between religious actors and the government. In addition, conservative religious leaders believe the clergy should be independent of the government, and view any government support of the clergy as a strategy of co-optation to gain legitimacy.^[8]

Muslims, Infidels, Invaders, and Occupiers

Historically, leaders in Afghanistan have garnered popular support for their agendas by appealing to Muslim solidarity. Rulers have often presented themselves as the defenders of Islam and have made it seem as if their wars of conquest were carried out for religious motives. The international forces working in Afghanistan today also recognize the importance of religion in creating perceptions. In their public information campaigns, they have highlighted the fact that most casualties of Taliban attacks are Muslims, and that “true Muslims” do not kill innocent, unarmed Muslims. President Karzai has also repeatedly condemned Taliban attacks and the killing of innocent civilians as the acts of those who are “not good Muslims.”

The Taliban, for its part, issues its decrees with reference to the goal of fighting non-Muslims and liberating Afghanistan from the “infidels.” The Taliban website presents the Taliban as the savior of the Afghan population, its liberator from the clutches of Western occupiers. While largely a local movement with roots and support in Pakistan, the Taliban has increasingly made references to the global *jihad*, and to the conflicts in Chechnya, Kashmir, and Palestine, as instances of the oppression of Muslims by infidels. It uses religion with a goal of uniting Muslims around the world: its website posts its messages in local languages as well as in Arabic, English, and Urdu.

Tensions among the Government, Tribal Leaders, and Religious Scholars

The role of religion in society has varied in intensity throughout Afghanistan's history. Religious scholars and tribal elders have historically been the two most influential groups outside the formal government. During the *jihad* against the Soviet Union, religious scholars swiftly replaced tribal elders as the preeminent leaders. The emphasis on holy war against infidels gained momentum, and local authorities lost the capacity to influence events. Instead, Pan-Islamic solidarity and alliances among Afghans, Arabs, Chechens, Pakistanis, and others^[9] became the key to victory. Religion became the unifying element among disparate Afghan communities and between Afghans and their foreign allies. Even with the

advent of Afghanistan's democratically elected and Western-backed government in 2001, the tribal leaders, to a large extent, have not been able to reverse this trend. Although the populace is beginning to realize the importance of tribal structures and the leaders representing them, they have yet to be officially recognized by the government and integrated into the political process.

The relationship between government and religious actors in Afghanistan has always been complex. Governments in Kabul at times have sought approval for their actions, and even existence, from religious authorities. In return, the religious actors have expected the governments to follow their advice.^[10] At other times, however, governments in Kabul have tried to exert their independent influence on the populace and curb the power of the religious scholars. During the two British invasions in the 19th century, religion was used to rally the populace against foreign occupation, while the period between the two world wars was one of religious lassitude.^[11]

Although religious leaders have played a crucial role in the fortunes of Afghanistan during the last three decades of the 20th century, over the past few years they have been largely sidelined from mainstream politics. Their loss of position since the fall of the Taliban has been the result of changes in Afghan society wrought by refugees outside their influence returning from Pakistan and Iran, Western influences on the government, cultural influences resulting from foreign aid and from the presence of non-Afghans and returning Afghan expatriates, and the continuation of violent conflicts and the political instability and insecurity that accompany these.

Key Trends in Education

The Role of Secular Education in Nation Building and the Marginalization of Religious Education

Education has been slipping from the control of the *mawlawi* (clerics who run the *madrassas*) as the country becomes more market driven and internationally integrated. Competition from government and privately run schools is threatening the survival of small *madrassas*. Schools in Afghanistan are divided into those that follow the centralized state curriculum, which is predominantly secular, and those that are focused on the primacy of religious education. Tensions between these two education systems have played a significant role in the way the country has developed.^[12] On one side is the Islamic education system with *madrassas* preaching religion, while on the other is the secular education system of primary and secondary schools, and colleges and universities that graduate students as part of the internationally accepted formal education system.^[13] Secular schools are supported and funded by the Afghan government, and assisted by India, the United Kingdom, the United States, and members of the International Security Assistance Force. Afghanistan's two

groups of students—the religious and the secular—hold clashing views on the direction and progress of the country. With its international supporters investing in and encouraging secular education, the government is unable to prevent the marginalization of Islamic education. This could widen the rift between the religiously educated and the government.

Given the number of international actors shaping the forces of Afghanistan's development and democratic governance, it is not surprising that secular education has gained significant ground in recent years. Over 5 million children have attended school since 2002, and large segments of the population understand the proven link between education and higher standards of living. Secular educational resources and schools are available to the youth in urban areas, and they are eager to pursue these opportunities.

In the villages, however, the youth generally go for religious education because secular schools are unavailable, and because the endemic security challenges encourage people to seek refuge in tradition. This widens the gap between city and rural populations. Increasing emphasis on secular education and educators at the cost of neglecting the religious scholars has also bred discontent among the *mullahs*. A significant number cite their frustration with the government for not consulting them, or ignoring their advice when they do consult them.

Madrassas

Religious schools, or *madrassas*, which were present in Afghanistan since the early years of Islam's presence there, evolved under different rulers and in different environments throughout the 20th century. While traditionally seen as an indispensable part of Afghan society, religious education in Afghanistan has sometimes faced hostility or indifference from other countries. The people of Afghanistan consider these institutions and religious scholars to be an integral part of their history and identity, but the West generally views *madrassas* as a breeding ground for extremism.

There is little support in foreign governments for investing in religious education because of limited understanding of Afghanistan, and the perception of links between *madrassas* and extremism. There is also concern that international involvement in building *madrassas* would fuel popular perceptions in Afghanistan that non-Muslims are trying to meddle with the Islamic faith. Negative attitudes already exist toward Muslim countries that are actively funding Afghan *madrassas* and influencing the curriculum, such as Egypt, Iran, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. The Karzai administration has few nondonor resources of its own to invest, and is wary of *madrassas* that are funded from Iran and Pakistan. Afghans studying in *madrassas* abroad, and allegedly being indoctrinated by extremist ideologies, are also a cause of concern. Iran has been investing heavily in curriculum development in the schools in western Afghanistan, especially in the provinces on the border between Iran and

Afghanistan, with a goal to shape the curriculum to present a more pro-Iranian view of history. With Pakistan being the center of negative attention and defamation in Afghanistan, owing to its use as a base of insurgency against Kabul, Iran has apparently chosen a soft-power approach in the hopes of influencing the course of events in Afghanistan.

The potential role of *madrassas* in providing greater legitimacy to the state must be carefully considered. *Madrassas* are currently marginalized, often confined to rural areas, are underfunded, and lack the accountability standards found in a secular education system. Thus, they seem far less able to produce graduates who could provide the kind of political leadership needed to address current national challenges. Afghanistan's leadership needs to strike a balance between promoting higher quality religious education and opening up society to progressive thought and democratic ideals. It is important that the government establish state-owned and state-run *madrassas* to counter the private *madrassas* established through individual charities. This will enable the government to model a curriculum based on Islamic values balanced with a practical secular content.

Historical and Current Evolution of Education in Afghanistan

Seeking knowledge is an integral part of the Islamic tradition. *Madrassas* were first established in Afghanistan during the last years of the Umayyad caliphate in the eighth century, during the time when Islam was new to the region.^[14] These *madrassas* continued to grow in number and proliferated during the reign of the Temur Gorgani dynasty of Herat.^[15]

Following the creation of the modern Afghan kingdom by Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1747, and particularly in the face of subsequent British pressure, government interest in *madrassas* declined. As a result, few new schools, if any, were established. The thrust of government policy focused on the creation of a system of schools more amenable to the purposes of the monarchy, and religious subjects were introduced into that system. Thus, predominantly religious education continued largely through individual scholarly efforts.^[16]

An increase in the number of *madrassas* took place during the middle years of the 20th century and continued until the Soviet invasion in 1978. Along with these *madrassas*, centers for *Tahfeez-e-Qur'an* (memorizing the Holy Qur'an) also sprang up.^[17]

After the Soviet invasion, the number of *madrassas* grew exponentially in areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan controlled by the anti-Soviet Afghan *mujahideen*, especially during the military regime of Zia ul Haq in Pakistan. The new *madrassas* were funded by various external sources, including the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), foreign governments, and nongovernmental Muslim welfare organizations. These organizations also funded *madrassas* for Afghan refugees and others outside of Afghanistan. For example, large theological seminaries were established along the Afghan-Pakistan border to create

a religiously motivated cadre to fight the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Students in these seminaries were Afghans, Arabs, Chechens, Egyptians, Pakistanis, and Saudis who were taught to fight the “Godless” Russians and “ensure that Afghanistan was liberated so it could be established as a good religious state.” The atmosphere was such that, according to a recent study, “Students learned basic mathematics by counting dead Russians and hand grenades.”^[18]

Between 1994 and 1996, the Taliban gradually expanded its influence in Afghanistan, starting in the Pashtun heartland of Kandahar and moving north and west. As a movement that originated in *madrassas* in Pakistan, the Taliban paid special attention to the establishment and regularization of *madrassas* in Afghanistan. It established six major *madrassas* in Kabul, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Herat, Ghazni, and Mazar-e-Sharif, respectively. It also established hundreds of smaller institutions, and registered them with the Religious Education Department of the Ministry of Education.^[19]

Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the Karzai administration has viewed *madrassas* as a possible source of the Taliban resurgence. Many *madrassas* subsequently closed down, not by government decree, but because of lack of funding from the government. In addition, the leading backers of the Karzai administration among Western governments do not appreciate the role and significance of *madrassas* in Afghanistan. Today there is a large number of remaining *madrassas* that struggle financially to support themselves and do not have the resources to accommodate all students desiring such religious education. This has created a gap between the demand for religious education and the ability of the state to provide it.

Conclusion

Afghanistan needs political leadership that is both democratic and progressive during its current transition. Broad participation requires that the political elite include those who reflect the religious values of the society. There is a need for openness and dialogue among the religious and nonreligious actors to find common ground for collaboration toward nation building. The religious actors need to respect the contributions of the international community in Afghanistan and recognize their presence as constructive to the rebuilding process. They also need to understand Afghanistan’s current thrust toward democratic reforms and accept it in light of the international backing for same. The nonreligious actors—the international community, NGOs, and most of all secular and progressive Afghans—need to understand the importance of religion in society and accord it the recognition it deserves. They also need to realize the historical role of religion as a uniting force, and work toward helping Afghanistan’s government integrate religious leaders into the political mainstream.

Religious leaders in Afghanistan currently lack resources and have lost credibility with the general population, and are thus easy prey for the antigovernment elements and the Taliban, who manipulate them against national interest. Empowering religious leaders in districts and provinces and providing them with the necessary resources to carry out their religious activities could be a concrete way to decrease their alienation and integrate them formally into the nation-building process. The integration into the government of Mullah Mutawakkil, former foreign minister under the Taliban regime, is a positive sign, yet more needs to be done to bring back other religious leaders who have been sidelined.

In order for Afghanistan to make the transition into an economically and politically stable country, a serious commitment to investing resources in education is necessary. Many Afghans, while embracing Western democratic values, do not countenance foreign interference in religious matters. While they appreciate the importance of secular education, they do not wish to embrace it at the cost of abandoning religious values. Any thrust toward secularization in education should therefore be complemented by serious commitment to and investment in religious education. The private *madrassas*, for now, do not seem interested in registering themselves with the government, as they see it as an intrusion in their right to impart education independently. They should be encouraged to continue their religious-based education, but an oversight body should be created to prevent them from teaching violent interpretations of Islam. Finding ways to increase the interface between religious and secular education would be a positive step forward.

Religious authorities need to be provided with ample recognition and resources to be able to practically exercise the ideological influence they have in the communities. The international community and the Afghan government also need to recognize the role of religious figures as partners in the country's nation building. Religious actors carry tremendous potential either to stabilize or destabilize the country through their influence. Whether or not their role contributes constructively to nation building depends on how well they are integrated into the political process. That is the challenge the Afghan government faces: balancing the religious nature of the society with the progressive needs of the nation.

Ethnoreligious and Political Dimensions of the Southern Thailand Conflict

Imtiyaz Yusuf

There are two groups of Muslims in Thailand. One segment is integrated into general society and has peaceful relations with the state; while the other, which resides in the deep South, is at odds with the state and shows separatist tendencies. The multiethnic, Thai-speaking Muslims in the North and the unintegrated, monoethnic, Malay-speaking Muslims in the South interpret Islam differently. The former see themselves as a part of a Buddhist multireligious country where Islam is a minority religion, while the latter view Islam as part of their ethnolinguistic identity in a region that was forcibly incorporated into Thailand.

Malay Muslims do not generally trust anybody who is not from their ethnic group, and consider themselves distinct from the larger Thai Muslim community. Malay Islamic identity is the result of a bonding between the Shafii school of Islamic law and Malay ethnic identity, where the *kaum*, or ethnic community, and *madhab*, or school of Islamic law, reinforce each other. Malay Islam was not originally radical, but developed a militant posture in opposition to Thai Buddhism.

The current separatists in the South are identified with the Barisan Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate (BRN-C), which became active in 1990, recruiting a new and younger generation of soldiers.^[1] Malay militant youth are inspired more by a radicalized version of Malay Shafiite Islam than the *jihadist* Islam of international terrorists, and their agenda is local and national rather than religious.

The Muslim world is watching the Islamic fraternity in Southern Thailand very closely. The conflict there has also drawn the attention of international and regional *jihadists* (i.e., ideological militant Islamic groups devoted to armed struggle against Muslim and non-Muslim nation states). The possibility of links to the global Islamic struggle cannot be completely ruled out, and some Thai military officials have reason to believe that local insurgents have obtained training from foreign *jihadists*.

Islam in Thailand

Islam came to Thailand from different directions: Burma, Cambodia, China, India, the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, Persia, and Yemen (Hadhrāmawt). Just like other South-east Asian Muslim communities, the Thai Muslim community is made up of two groups: the “native/local Muslims” and the “immigrant settler Muslims.” Hence, there is ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and political variety within the Thai Muslim community.

The immigrant Muslims of Thailand belong to different sectarian and ethnic backgrounds. For example, Persian Muslims belonging to the Shia sect served at the court of the Ayudhaya kingdom in different official capacities.^[2] The majority of Thai Muslims belong to the Sunni sect; there is also a small Shia community belonging to the Imami and Bohras/Mustali Ismailis subgroups within the Shia sect.^[3] Overall, Thai Muslims make up the largest minority religious group in the country, constituting “a national minority rather than... a border minority.”^[4]

Islam in Thailand operates in three configurations defined by history and location:

- The ethnicized, Malay-speaking Islam is practiced in the provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala of the deep South. These southern Muslims make up about 44 percent of the total Thai Muslim population (which currently is between 5 and 7 million).
- The integrated, ethnically Malay but Thai-speaking Islam is practiced in the province of Satun and in the upper South in Krabi, Nakorn Si Thammarat, Phangnga, Phuket, and Songkla.
- The multiethnic Thai-speaking integrated Islam is practiced in the central Thai provinces of Bangkok and Ayudhaya and north and northeast Thailand. This group comprises Muslims of Bengali, Cham, Chinese, Indian, Indonesian, Malay, Pathan, and Persian ethnic backgrounds. These migrant Muslims from neighboring and far countries settled in Thailand for economic and political reasons, such as fleeing religious persecution at the hands of the communists in China and the nationalists in Burma. There are also Thai converts to Islam either through marriage or religious conversion.

The first type of Islam in Thailand has been largely resistant to integration within the Thai polity, while the second and third have been integrative.

Political Context

Historically, the Thai political system has been described as a constitutional monarchy in the form of a “secularized Buddhist polity” in a “stable semi-democracy.”^[5] Thailand follows the communitarian democracy model, characterized by “stability, peace and order, the upholding of shared moral and cultural values, and the priority of communitarian interests.”^[6] This model has allowed Thai Muslims to define their own communal development. Meanwhile,

their relationship with the Buddhists is one of mutual religious coexistence, without much socioreligious interaction or interreligious dialogue. Since the adoption of a constitutional monarchy in 1932, the Thai political system has undergone major shifts, advances, and setbacks along the democratic path^[7] caused by the developing roles of the military, bureaucracy, and ethnic groups such as the emergent Chinese middle class and Thai Muslims.

Culture, Religion, and Politics

Thailand has successfully managed to produce a national Thai identity based on commonality of language, sociocultural tolerance, and assimilation through a growing economy. Yet underneath this lies a variety of religiocultural identities positioned along ethnic lines. Thailand is a multiethnic and multireligious country, with a Muslim population of 5 to 7 million out of 65 million people.^[8] The monoethnic Malay Muslims of the deep South constitute about 44 percent of the total Thai Muslim population,^[9] and they are the majority in that region. Malay Muslims call themselves *orae nayu* (Malay Muslim) who *kecek nayu* (speak local Malay), and consider themselves to be different from *orae siye*, ethnic Thai Buddhists who are the minority in the South. They feel offended if referred to as “Thai Muslim,” a term they interpret ethnically. According to them, a Malay cannot be anything other than Muslim, and a Thai is always Buddhist. They also see the term “Thai Muslim” as an indication of forced assimilation by the Thai state. Other Muslims, those who are multiethnic and reside mostly in the upper southern, central, northern, and northeastern provinces of the country, do not feel any offense at the term “Thai Muslim.”¹

The Thai Muslim community is further internally divided along denominational lines, and the spread of Islamic religious puritanical trends from South Asia and the Middle East further divides them. Recently, a Thai Shia Muslim community has emerged.

Historical Background of the Southern Thailand Conflict

In 1906, Siam annexed the Malay Muslim provinces of Nong Chik, Ra-ngae, Raman, Sai Buri, Yala, and Yaring, which were parts of the independent Malay Muslim vassal state of Patani. Next, Siam dissolved and united the provinces into what came to be known as “*monthon Pattani*” or a subdivision of Pattani.²

¹ The term “Thai Muslim” is seen as ethnically offensive by the Malay Muslims of the South because it was imposed by Bangkok after the declaration of the Patronage of Islamic Act of 1945. Deep southerners prefer referring to themselves as “Malay Muslims,” but this has an ethnic, regional, and sectarian flavor that overlooks the other sections of the Thai Muslim community spread across the country, which differ along ethnic, provincial, and even theological lines from those in the deep South. Therefore, this paper uses the terms “Thai Islam” and “Thai Muslims” when referring to the general profile of the Muslim community of Thailand, and “Malay Muslims” for those residing in the deep South.

² “Pattani” is the Thai spelling; the original Malay spelling is “Patani.”

The annexation was further strengthened in 1909 by an Anglo-Siamese treaty that drew a border between Pattani and the Malay states of Kedah, Kelantan, Perak, and Perlis. According to this treaty, the British recognized Siam sovereignty over Pattani. In return, Siam gave up its territorial claim over Kelantan and recognized British control over the other Malay states of Kedah, Perak, and Perlis.

After 1909, Siam embarked on a centralization policy, which led to the imposition of Thai administrative officials in the three deep southern Malay provinces. Most of these officials were Thai Buddhists and unfamiliar with the local language and Muslim culture, which led to social antagonism.

According to the centralization policy, the former *negara* Patani state was divided into three provinces— Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala—which now make up the three Malay Muslim majority provinces of the South. This period also saw the beginning of the Pattani separatist movement, which was initially a royalist movement led by Tengku Mahmud Mahyuddin, a prominent Pattani leader and the son of the last raja of Pattani.

The era of World War II (1939–45) witnessed the beginning of the Pattani nationalist movement. Led by Haji Sulong, it was put down by the central Thai authorities. During the 1970s, the resistance evolved into a nationalist irredentism, and has become a form of ethnoreligious nationalism with a strong emphasis on Malay Muslim ethnic and religious identity.

The separatist movement in Southern Thailand seeks to sever the Malay region from the rest of the country, although official autonomy is an acceptable option. Over the last 50 years, numerous political groups and movements formed to support this cause, but the present insurgency is largely faceless. No single group has come out in recent years to claim leadership.³ The insurgents have blended into the local population, and it is said that they have a plan to resurface later, once they have gained enough strength on the ground and more support in local communities.

³ These groups were: the Association of Malays of Greater Patani (GAMPAR), the Patani People's Movement (PPM), the Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Patani (BNPP), the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN), the Patani United Liberation Organization (PULO), and the Barisan Bersatu Mujahideen Patani (BBMP). During the 1980s to 1990s, new groups emerged, including the BRN-C, which is suspected of being behind the current insurgency along with many other factions; most of them are filled by youth who are independent of former separatist groups such as the PULO. There is also the presence of the Gerakan Mujahidin Islam Patani (GMIP), established by Afghan veterans in 1995, and Bersatu, or New PULO, an offshoot of the former PULO. Source: International Crisis Group, "Southern Thailand Insurgency, Not Jihad," p. i, available at www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_east_asia/098_southern_thailand_insurgency_not_jihad.pdf; accessed January 24, 2009. See also International Crisis Group, "Southern Thailand: The Impact of the Coup," Asia Report No. 129 (2007), p. 6, available at www.crisisgroup.org/library/documents/asia/south_east_asia/129_southern_thailand_the_impact_of_the_coup_web.pdf; accessed January 24, 2009.

After a brief lull in the 1980s and 1990s, the Southern Thai conflict reemerged in January 2004. As of November 2008, more than 3,150 people have died in the ongoing crisis.^[10]

Ethnoreligious Dimension of the Conflict in Southern Thailand

It is important to understand the ethnoreligious dimensions of the conflict in Southern Thailand. Malay Muslims give primacy to their ethnic identity and view their life experience through the prism of their religion, *agama*.⁴ Thus the ritual, mythic/narrative, experiential/emotional, ethical, legal, social, material, and political dimensions of life are all interpreted and perceived through the lens of ethnic identity. Ethnicity is mixed with religion, resulting in the formation of an ethnicized view of Islam.

The majority of southern Muslims speak Pattani Malay, or Jawi, and are not fluent in Thai, the official state language. Pattani Malay, identical to the Kelantanese Malay spoken across the border, is an important identity marker of the local community. In the past, Pattani Malay was the language of traditional, conservative Islamic learning, and it is still the language of education for Pattani Muslims. During the 1930s and 1940s, the government decreed that *pondoks*, *madrassa*-like schools, should offer instruction in Thai instead of Malay and Arabic. Local Malay Muslims saw this as a threat to their identity, and *pondoks* began to encourage Pan-Malay nationalism and Islamic revivalism through their curricula.^[11]

The phenomenon of ethnoreligious nationalism in Southern Thailand is the result of the merging of Malay ethnic identity, local Malay Islam, the traditional Shafiite version of Islam, and the puritan Wahabbi acquired through study at foreign educational institutions in the Middle East and South Asia. Thousands of Thai Muslim youth, after completing *pondok* education, pursue further religious studies at Muslim universities in Cairo, India, Indonesia, Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Saudi Arabia. Influenced by the religiotheological trends of Islamic resurgence during their educational stay, returning Thai students have promoted Islamic reform and the growth of local Thai Muslim communities along puritan and sectarian lines.⁵

The Malay Muslims of Southern Thailand view national integration as their own cultural disintegration for, according to them, Thai Buddhism and Malay Islam belong to two different cosmological orientations.^[12] According to Surin Pitsuwan, a southern Muslim and former foreign minister of Thailand, the Malay Muslims “do not want to be integrated into the Thai state. They do not want to lose their religious and cultural autonomy. If the Thai

⁴ The term *agama* means “religion” in the Malay language. Malays refer to Islam as *agama* in the reified sense. Its meaning is loaded, as it refers both to religion and to Malay ethnic identification.

⁵ It is important to note that not all such reformists are insurgents.

state is the manifestation of the Buddhist cosmology, the Malay Muslims do not want to be a part of it.”^[13] The largely ethnic orientations of the two communities have been described as “closed systems.”^[14]

In fact, the Malay Muslims could be called the most ethnicized community within the worldwide Muslim community. They are even suspicious of other Muslims, unless they are members of the same ethnic group or speak the Melayu language. From their perspective, converting to Islam is not enough: one has to *masuk Melayu*—become a Malay—to be accepted as a Muslim.

The network of the Malay *Ulama* and their role as custodians of religious and ethnic tradition makes them important players in the conflict. The first person to bring Malay Muslim nationalist ideas to Southern Thailand was the Islamic cleric Haji Sulong, who was a reformist and political activist educated in Mecca. Upon returning to Pattani in 1930, he engaged in the reform of the Malay Muslim community and represented its interests to the government by seeking political autonomy within a federal system.^[15] In 1947, Haji Sulong made seven ethnoreligious demands to the central government, focusing on political freedom for the Malays and the preservation of their language. His only religious demand involved the recognition and enforcement of Muslim law.^[16] Since his mysterious death in 1954, Haji Sulong has become a symbol of resistance to the Thai state.

An ethnoreligious interpretation of southern Malay Muslim identity was recently affirmed by a prominent southern Muslim scholar, Dr. Ismae-Alee of Prince of Songkla University. He remarked that state ignorance of Malay life and the role of Islam in it were the cause of the conflict. He also said that southern Muslims have different lifestyles and beliefs from those elsewhere in the country, and that identity, nationalism, and history are deeply rooted in their psyches.^[17]

The Southern Thailand Insurgency during the Thaksin Era (2001–06)

The reemergence of the southern insurgency, marked by bombings, kidnappings, beheadings, and shootings, was met with force by the then-ruling Thaksin government. Officials used excessive force and imposed martial law in the deep South. The violence continued, and the Krue Se (April 28, 2004) and Tak Bai (October 25, 2004) incidents became part of indelible Malay Muslim memory.

The Krue Se Jihad

In protest of the martial law, on April 28, 2004, insurgents attacked 15 security posts and police stations in Pattani, Songkla, and Yala. In all, 107 militants and 5 security personnel

died, and 17 were arrested. Thirty-seven Muslim militants were killed in the blockade of the Krue Se mosque with a shoot-to-kill order. They were suspected members of a radical religious cell called Hikmat Allah Abadan or Abadae (Brotherhood of the Eternal Judgment of God), centered on a religious teacher named Ustaz Soh.^[18] Cell members were indoctrinated with an ideology of hatred for Thai Buddhists and cast their separatist aspirations in mystical Sufi interpretation. Those holding out in the mosque were reported to have engaged in mystical religious prayer services, reciting sacred verses and drinking holy water after the evening prayer. The militants were convinced that the rituals would make them invisible to the police and invulnerable to bullets.^[19]

A 34-page Jawi/Malay language book, *Berjihad di Pattani*, was found on the body of a dead militant. The book, published in Kelantan, Malaysia, uses the teachings of the Qur'an to promote *jihad* to separate Pattani and exterminate people of different faiths. The book says that not even one's parents should be spared if they leak information to the government.^[20] Chapter 1 talks of "*jihad* warriors," and encourages readers to wage religious war against "those outside the religion," with the ultimate goal of reviving the Pattani state. Chapter 3 talks of killing all opponents, even family members, and sacrificing one's life to be in heaven with Allah. It concludes by promoting a constitutional state of Pattani based on the Sunni Shafii school of law.^[21] This book represents the first pairing of Qur'anic verses and the concept of *jihad* made in relation to the Southern Thai conflict. It may have been influenced by *jihadist* texts that emerged in the Middle East, such as the *al-Farida al-Gha'iba* by Muhammad Farraj, which inspired the assassins of President Sadat of Egypt in 1981,^[22] and texts by Maulana Abul al-Maududi of Pakistan and Sayyid Qutb of Egypt.

The dead at the Krue Se mosque were treated by their relatives as martyrs (*shahid*), and their corpses were buried unwashed, following the Prophet Muhammad's burial rituals for his companions who had died in the battles with the Meccans.

The Chularatchamontri, or Shaikh al-Islam, of Thailand, who, along with the Central Islamic Committee, is the chief official representative of Thai Muslims at the national level, called for the destruction of the book and appointed a nine-member committee to write a rebuttal in the Thai language.^[23] The rebuttal, "Facts about the Distortion of Islamic Teachings as Appeared in 'The Struggle for Pattani,'" was widely distributed.^[24]

The Krue Se mosque incident led to a large public media debate about the methods employed in dealing with the situation.^[25] It also led to a wider policy debate about how the government should address matters in the South. Some critics said that it was unwise for the Thaksin government to dismantle the Southern Border Provincial Administration Center (SBPAC) and the Combined 43rd Civilian-Police-Military Command (CPM 43), which were established in 1981 during the period of democratization of Thai politics. These two entities had played an important role in educating the Thai public about the culture and

lifestyle of southern Muslims. The SBPAC had also served as a sounding board for local ideas about how to implement national accommodation policies. Some also criticized the attitudes of government officials who had been sent to work in the South. Coming largely from majority Buddhist areas of the country, the officials were charged with being culturally insensitive to Malay Muslim values, resulting in conflicts and resentment.

Surin Pitsuwan criticized the Thaksin government's promotion of the tourist industry, which brought alien moral and cultural dimensions to the deep South. The government's actions were perceived as culturally and religiously insensitive to southern Muslims, and led to discontent and unrest. Pitsuwan observed, "The struggle in the deep South has a deeper cultural dimension that is being overlooked by the present national leadership."^[26] He also issued a seven-point plan for long-term development of the deep South that emphasized the need for the government's attitude to change, especially its "Bangkok knows best" posture. He called for a unified approach in analyzing the problems and seeking solutions that protected human rights, encouraged local participation, and made human resource development more of a priority than grand economic and materialistic schemes. In addition, he cautioned the government to be mindful of the foreign or external dimension of the problem, in the context of the Muslim world's sensitivity toward issues of minority Muslims.^[27]

The Tak Bai Incident

Violence continued after the Krue Se mosque incident. Six months later, during Ramadan, there was another incident in Tak Bai district of Narathiwat. Eighty-six Muslims died as a result of a demonstration outside the district police station against the jailing of a local Muslim accused of inciting violence. Six of these died on the scene; 78 died of suffocation in trucks they were piled on for transportation to a military camp. This debacle caused a major controversy. There were charges of excessive force, overly harsh methods, and human rights violations,^[28] and demands from the Thai public that Prime Minister Thaksin apologize for mishandling the incident.^[29] He refused.

The government set up an independent fact-finding commission to investigate how the protestors died. Its findings criticized the disorganized method of transporting them, which was supervised by inexperienced, low-ranking personnel; it did not find that the deaths had been caused intentionally. Some senior security officials were faulted, and the report suggested that families of the dead, wounded, and missing be compensated.^[30]

After the arrest of four Islamic teachers accused of complicity in these incidents, the government assumed that the pondoks were a breeding ground for insurgents and initiated a policy that the pondoks conform to the country's general educational system. But it has also been suggested that the government should concentrate on promoting a secular curriculum

rather than censoring religious education, which would enable the *pondok* graduates to pursue higher education within the Thai system instead of going to Middle Eastern and South Asian religious seminaries for further education.^[31] Finger-pointing at the pondoks is not enough. There is a need to address the educational problem without treading upon the cultural and religious sensitivities of the Malay Muslim population.

The Southern Thailand Insurgency during the Surayud Government (2006–07)

The 2006 military coup took a reconciliatory stance toward the southern conflict. The new prime minister, General Surayud, offered an apology for the mishandling of the crisis by the previous Thaksin government. He also announced an amnesty to those who withdrew from the insurgency movement.^[32] He was hoping to convince older generations of separatists of the PULO and BRN to play a mediating role between the government and the younger insurgents, who have a more radically violent approach. The BRN-C, which is the most active current insurgent group, rejected negotiations outright,^[33] and other groups did not respond.

The interim government also revived the SBPAC—a civilian-military-police task force which formerly offered a forum for dialogue between the locals and authorities.^[34] The revived SBPAC, under its new name of Southern Border Provinces Development Center (SBPDC), is playing a crucial role in resolving the southern conflict by working to create mutual acceptance and trust between Thai Buddhists and Malay Muslims, and helping them manage their political and social affairs together.^[35]

This is a difficult task, as Muslim-Buddhist relations are at their lowest level ever, with feelings of distrust and alienation on both sides. Prime Minister Surayud’s apology and dialogue-based approach has to be supplemented with other measures, such as delivering justice, recognizing local language and culture, and letting locals manage their own affairs.^[36] While Prime Minister Surayud was sincere in finding a solution for the southern conflict, national politics (such as restoring democracy) occupied much of his time and energy.^[37]

The Southern Thailand Insurgency during the Samak Sundaravej and Somchai Wongsawat Governments (2008)

As a result of the December 2007 general election, Palang Prachachon Party (PPP) leader Samak Sundaravej formed the new government. PPP was supported by Thaksin, who was in exile. The new government surprised the public when then–interior minister Chalerm Yubamrung announced it was time to find a new solution to the violence in the South, and that this could be achieved by instituting some form of autonomy.^[38] This announcement was received with much enthusiasm, but the proposal was soon shot down by the prime

minister, who warned his minister not to engage in loose talk.^[39] The Samak government then proposed studying the Aceh model in Indonesia and applying it to Southern Thailand.^[40] That idea was rejected the next day by a senior military officer and security experts, who said that the two situations were not comparable.^[41] After this debacle, the Samak government proposed initiating joint military and private business ventures in the South to boost the local economy and offset the insurgency.^[42] By this time, the central government was caught in political bickering with the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), an outside Parliament opposition group, which was bent on driving the PPP government out of office. The government transferred responsibility for the southern insurgency to the army, which has been heavy handed in quelling the violence. Though the military has reduced the number of violent attacks from militants, there have been assassinations, disappearances, human rights abuses, and shootings of Muslim religious teachers.^[43]

In July 2008, an obscure group claiming to be separatists came forward to announce a ceasefire. It was soon discovered that they were former separatist leaders who had no control over the new, young, and faceless insurgents.^[44] Samak was out of office by September 9, 2008, and he was succeeded by Somchai Wongsawat. Soon after came news that the Indonesian government was hosting talks between the Thai government and a group of southern separatists, but that the Thai general at the signing event was not an official representative of the government.^[45] Prime Minister Somchai made a visit to the South on October 28, 2008, but it was clear that the army was in full control, not the central government.^[46] The Somchai government allotted 8 billion Thai *baht* to the army to fight the insurgency in 2009,^[47] but Somchai was booted out of office on December 2, 2008.

Thai Muslim Attitudes toward the Conflict in Southern Thailand

Thai Muslims in the rest of the country view the conflict in the deep South as the outcome of the unique history of the region, and related to Malay ethnic sentiment. They sympathize with the suffering of the southerners but do not view the conflict as *jihād* or as religiously justified. In their view, the Southern situation does not fulfill the *shurut*—the conditions for *jihād* according to Islamic law and the Qur'an, which states: "Allah does not forbid you to be kind and equitable to those who had neither fought against your faith nor driven you out of your homes. In fact Allah loves the equitable" (Qur'an 60:8).

Islamic law describes the following preconditions for sanctioning military *jihād*:

1. There are aggressive designs against Islam, that the state prohibits the practice of Islam, and that there is oppression,
2. That there are concerted efforts to eject Muslims from their legally acquired property, and
3. Military campaigns are being launched to eradicate Muslims.

In the view of the non-southern Muslims, the conflict in Southern Thailand is about ethnicity, not religion. They see it as a political problem that needs a political solution, and they do not offer support to the southern insurgency.

Thai Muslims hold that the Thai state offers enough religious freedom for the practice of Islam as a religion and a culture. In fact, the religious freedom available to Thai Muslims may not be available in many Muslim countries. Thai Muslims cherish the religious freedom they enjoy in Thailand, which does not place restrictions on religious practices of cultural activities. Most are ready to help southerners learn how Muslims can coexist with others.

Majority Thai Muslim Attitudes and Participation in State Activities

Over the decades, Thai Muslims have become more politically engaged and outspoken at the national and international levels, especially in relation to their religious, cultural, and group concerns. Since the adoption of a constitutional monarchy in 1932, Thai Muslims have participated in national political activities during both its democratic and nondemocratic eras. This has earned them recognition in the political system, and Thai Muslim politicians have represented different political parties in parliamentary elections. Thai Muslim politicians representing the Muslim majority constituencies of the South have long been concerned with developmental problems facing Muslims, such as educational amelioration, economic progress, cultural and religious freedom, and political recognition.

In 1988, Malay-speaking politicians from the deep South formed the Wahdah political faction, whose priority was to address developmental problems facing the Malay Muslim community from within the political system. Wahdah has been described as an ethnic movement working to achieve the goals of Thai Muslims.^[48] Wahdah sees itself as an independent political group ready to support any party that is committed to Thai Muslim concerns. It first aligned itself with the New Aspiration Party (NAP), established in 1990. Malay-speaking members representing Wahdah obtained cabinet posts following the elections of 1992, 1995, 1997, and 2001.

Further Thai Muslim integration into the political system is apparent in the number of Muslim politicians who have won seats in provincial and national parliamentary bodies in areas that are majority Buddhist or have mixed constituencies. The appointment of Surin Pitsuwan further demonstrates the shifting political engagement of Muslims in Thai politics. Pitsuwan served as the deputy foreign affairs minister from 1992 to 1995, and as minister of foreign affairs from 1997 to 2001. Surin currently serves as the secretary general of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

In response to the increased political representation of Muslims, the Thai government has also adjusted its policies to accommodate the religiocultural demands of the community. For example, Muslim women are allowed to wear the *hijab* in pictures for official documents, such as identity cards and passports, and at official places of work. The government has also facilitated travel arrangements for Thai pilgrims to the annual Hajj in Saudi Arabia, granted official holidays in the South for the celebration of religious festivals such as the ‘Id al-Fitr and ‘Id al-Adha, supported the organization of the annual official Mawlid celebration (the birthday of the Prophet), and granted the religious certification of *halal* for items produced by Thai food companies. Additionally, the government recognized the office of the Chularajmontri, or Shaikh al-Islam, as the official head of the Thai Muslim community, and empowered the Central Islamic Committee of Thailand and the Provincial Councils of Islamic Affairs to manage Muslim affairs at the national and provincial levels.

However, these developments have not been without setbacks. After the resurgence of the southern insurgency in 2004 and Wahdah’s alignment with the ruling Thai Rak Thai (TRT) party, which was responsible for using excessive force during the Krue Se and Tak Bai incidents, Wahdah lost popular support. As a result, in 2005, Wahdah politicians lost their parliamentary seats to Muslim politicians from the Democrat Party. After the coup in 2006, which marked the end of the Thaksin regime, the Wahdah faction resigned from the TRT party. In the 2007 parliamentary election, Wahdah aligned with the ruling PPP, but won only two seats in the deep South.

Nevertheless, the majority of Thai Muslims today see no contradiction between their religious affiliation and their status as Thai citizens. Many view the role of being a good citizen as compatible with the social teachings of Islam. For example, they enthusiastically joined the 2006–07 celebrations honoring King Bhumibhol Adulyadej in the 60th year of his ascension to the Thai throne.

Conclusion

The problems in Southern Thailand are the result of decades of economic neglect; lack of employment opportunities for local Muslims in the public and private sectors; the cultural insensitivity of the bureaucracy; and the nonrecognition of religious, linguistic, and cultural diversity within the Thai polity. A solution requires greater effort by the Thai government to meet the demands of the local Malay Muslim population. A peace process in Southern Thailand would allay concerns in the Muslim world about the treatment of this Muslim minority. Practical steps need to be taken to implement the recommendations resulting from recent discussions between the government and Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), the recommendations in the communiqué issued at the end of the 34th Session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign

Ministers (ICFM) in Islamabad, Pakistan, May 15–17, 2007. Recommendations call for accelerating the process of accountability to build confidence in the local Muslim population, and granting it authority to manage its affairs within the sphere of the Thai constitution.^[49]

At the national level, the government should also apply the June 2006 recommendations of the National Reconciliation Commission, which was chaired by former prime minister Anand Panyarachun. The commission recommended introducing Islamic law; making the ethnic Pattani Malay, or Jawi language, the official language in the region; and establishing an unarmed peacekeeping force and the Peaceful Strategic Administrative Centre for Southern Border Provinces. The report was submitted to the Thaksin government, but because of political instability, it has been on the back burner ever since, not receiving serious attention from any official quarter.

Thai Muslims have coexisted with Thai Buddhists for centuries, but the relationship has recently been put to the test. The state should initiate political dialogue with Malay Muslims and work toward mutual recognition of the inherent ethnoreligious and cultural diversity in Thai society. This will contribute to building an overall peace and religious pluralism. Both Thai Buddhists and Thai Muslims should offer their full cooperation in this effort. Military means to solve the southern conflict are unwise, for they do not address the root causes of unrest.^[50]

The intermittent talk of giving autonomy to the South has been fruitless. The Thai government should act decisively, as delay only causes further strengthening of popular support for the insurgency. Political will on the part of the Thai state is needed to create a long-term political solution for the Thai deep South.

Madrasahs in Pakistan: Role and Emerging Trends

Khalid Rahman

Religion has always played an important role in shaping South Asian Muslim society and politics. A strong education system was brought by Muslims when they first arrived to the region, helping embed religion into almost all aspects of public and private life.

Madrasahs (religious educational institutes) were the center of these educational activities and provided guidance not only for religious matters, but for worldly affairs. Students studied science, medical and engineering courses, algebra, geometry, logic, and philosophy alongside *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and Arabic and Persian grammar. The broad and practical nature of the syllabi enabled the students of *madrasahs* to be good doctors, engineers, architects, teachers, and statesmen.^[1]

However, with the advent of British rule in 1756, *madrasahs* began to lose their influence. The British built new schools to train people in administrative affairs and divided the system of education into two separate domains: religious and secular, traditional and modern, old and new. The framework and objectives of the curricula in *madrasahs* and the secular schools established during British rule were very different. This created a rift between their graduates that only widened with the passage of time, creating mutual suspicion and incomprehension.

Moreover, the scarcity of resources for developing innovative methods of research and teaching, including technology, forced *madrasah* scholars to adopt a defensive approach: they limited their educational activities to protecting religious texts (the Qur'an, collections of *hadith*, sayings of the Prophet, and those relating to *fiqh*) and transmitting them to younger generations.

Madrasahs in Pakistan

Even after the creation of the new Muslim homeland of Pakistan, the opportunity for *madrasahs* to regain their influence was lacking, and the doors for government employment were still closed to their graduates because of the dominance of modern education in the country. Therefore, the objectives of the religious education system in Pakistan remained

the same as they were under British rule in India: preparing *imams* (leaders) for mosques, teachers for schools, orators for weekly sermons, and religious leaders to carry out rituals and social responsibilities such as *nikahs* (marriage contracts), divorce, inheritance, and funerals.^[2] *Madrassas* remained largely divided into various schools of thought.

Voices from both inside and outside *madrassas* are raised intermittently in support of bringing change to the system. International events and situations have affected the thinking of those associated with *madrassas*. The first major event was the Iranian Revolution in 1979, which gave *Ulama* (religious scholars) and religious segments of society a sense of having political power. Another critical development was the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan around the same time. A broad spectrum of Muslims, including not only scholars and students of *madrassas* but also the modern educated university teachers and students, supported the people of Afghanistan in ousting the Soviets from their homeland. This laid the basis for cooperation by people of different schools of thought and religious circles, who were all concerned with the Islamic cause and the well-being of Muslims.^[3]

A more recent influential event was the American invasion of Afghanistan. Whereas the earlier events energized the *madrassas*, this has caused religious schools to consider modifying their basic role of providing religious education.^[4] The policies of Western powers and the international media often treat *madrassas* solely as a breeding ground for terrorists.^[5] This has brought *madrassas* of different schools of thought closer because of their common feeling of being misunderstood.

Apart from these international political events, the increasing number of Islamic centers and communities in the West has created a need for *madrassa* students to understand Western lifestyles and modern-day issues. Equally important is learning different languages to communicate with Westerners and provide guidance to Muslim diasporas. *Madrassas* have begun to make concerted efforts to meet these challenges, rather than trying to avoid them as they have in the past. Religious leaders are calling on *madrassas* to teach subjects that will make their students more relevant in the modern world.^[6]

These questions are not new, but the extraordinary increase of the debate surrounding them is. How should the current syllabus be reconciled with the contemporary era? How should this change take place? What is the impact of national and international attention on *madrassas*? Pressures from many quarters add urgency to these matters, including those stemming from the US-led “war on terror,” demands for change in the *madrassa* system by foreign countries, the publication of reports on *madrassas* by several international organizations,^[7] and actions by the government of Pakistan for the reform of *madrassas*.

This paper is an attempt to increase understanding of emerging trends in *madrassas*, and is based on empirical research carried out in 56 leading *madrassas* from all schools of thought.^[8] These institutions were chosen because of the excellence of their scholars and the

number of students attending, and because their influence extends beyond the school walls into their communities. This influence has two important dimensions: smaller *madrassas* look toward prominent ones for guidance, and graduating students who establish new institutes follow the same trends as at their alma maters. While the 56 schools surveyed are not representative of the wide range of schools in Pakistan, they are representative of the best and most progressive trends, and therefore deserve special attention as credible models of reform.

Process of Change in Madrassas: Basic Factors

While analyzing the emerging changes in *madrassas*, it is important to have an overview of the role and influence of these schools in society and the role of the founders, leaders, and boards in individual *madrassas*:

- *Madrassas* consider their independence their most vital asset and are reluctant to allow the government to play any direct role in their educational system, syllabi, and financial matters. There is little possibility of bringing any change to *madrassas* if it impinges on their independence.
- *Madrassas* fulfill a fundamental need in society. Around 97 percent of Pakistan's society is Muslim, and it is inevitable that there would be a demand for religious education. Even the very liberal members of society want their children to have a basic religious education. Government schools do not offer even the minimum religious requirement, learning the Qur'an. For this reason, it should not be surprising that the number of *madrassas* is growing—as is the number of private schools offering mainstream education.
- Demands are growing for *madrassas* to widen their role in society by adding modern education to their religious curricula. Making voluntary changes because of public demand may enable *madrassas* to accept more monetary support from external sources, as long as this assistance does not require that they sacrifice their independence.
- The expectations of *madrassa* sponsors and the matters for which the general public seeks guidance from *madrassas* are important factors in the process of change. The general public's interaction with *madrassas* is not limited to religious jurisprudence. Now people are looking to religious schools to answer questions about economic, financial, sociopsychological, and professional matters.¹ Globalization and the media are also helping *madrassas* disseminate their teachings to a wider audience.
- The founders of *madrassas* and the boards they are affiliated with play a vital role in the process of change. Traditionally, the identity of every *madrassa* is associated

¹ These include banking, insurance, business contracts, Islamic laws and principles regarding guidance for the upbringing of new generations in the West, and issues of living as a minority in a predominantly non-Muslim society.

with its founder and its successive leadership. Until recently, each *madrassa* was governed independently,² and the founder adopted the system and the syllabus of his alma mater. Now school boards are gaining influence.

- Hostility toward *madrassas*, government pressure for reforms, and an extraordinary interest in them at the international level have brought five of these boards together to establish a new organization: Ittehad-e-Tanzeem-e-Madaris-e-Deeniya (United Madrassa Organization—ITMD). This body, though still very loose in structure, has become an important player in affecting the process of change. On the one hand, it carries out discussions and negotiations with the government. On the other, it is helping to unite *madrassas* that belong to different schools of thought. Recently, ITMD suggested that the government create a separate board (Inter-Madrassa Board) to oversee this organization.³

The process of change is continuously working its way through the *madrassa* system, albeit slowly. Changing circumstances will continue to make it necessary for *madrassas* to prepare themselves for contemporary needs. There is a realization of this fact in *madrassas* at all levels, and they are taking initiatives on their own.

Emerging Trends in Madrassas

The Role of Madrassas and Their Graduates

How *madrassas* perceive their role in society can be seen from descriptions administrators give of the ideal *madrassa*: it should provide education and training as well as promulgate religion in the wider community, play an effective and practical role in the reformation of society, provide guidance in religious affairs, and promote religious tolerance. Leading *madrassas* cite as their distinguishing characteristics a high standard of religious and contemporary education, discipline, and extracurricular activities, with a view toward broadening the educational approach.

These approaches are also expanding the scope of *madrassa* graduates in practical and professional fields. Teaching at *madrassas* still appears to be the primary preference for their graduates, but now an increasing number are finding positions at other types of schools, and

² Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Arabia was the first board that came into existence. This was followed by Tanzeem-ul-Madaris Pakistan (1960 and revived in 1974), Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Shia (1983), Rabta-tul-Madaris Al-Islamia (1983), and Wafaq-ul-Madaris Al-Salfia (1983).

³ This suggestion has been accepted in principle during talks between ITMD and the Ministry of Religious Affairs (2007). The suggested board will consist of seven members, with a vice chairman and two members nominated by the *madrassa* boards. According to the decision, it would be implemented after the required legislation; however, this suggestion has not gone through the legislative process yet. Source: “Letter Number IBCC/ES/3780-02,” Inter-Board Committee of Chairmen, Ministry of Education, Government of Pakistan, October 6, 2007.

at colleges and even universities.⁴ *Khatibat* (preaching) in the military is also an important destination for the graduating students of *madrassas*. A number of *madrassa* graduates have permanent jobs of engaging in *dawah* (proselytizing) and other religious activities abroad.

Leadership, Administrative, and Financial Affairs

Traditionally, the founders of *madrassas* were the sole leaders, and there was rarely a governing body or advisory council. Because of this, most *madrassas* worked in a rather informal manner. There was no proper system or policy for the admission of new students, uniforms were rarely required, and keeping records of students or taking attendance was almost nonexistent. Similarly, there was little or no attention toward expanding study and hostel facilities. Financial matters in most *madrassas* were governed in the same loose fashion. Present research has found that the role of leadership has not changed significantly, but there have been notable improvements in administrative and financial areas. Past and current trends are summarized here:

- The *Muhtamim* (administrator) is usually the founder of the *madrassa*, and is often succeeded by one of his children or a family member. One objection to *madrassas* is that this practice makes the schools personal property passed down from father to son. However, the point of view of the *madrassas* seems to be that since the *Muhtamim*'s children assist him from early childhood, they are better groomed than an outsider to take over. The founder considers the administration of his *madrassa* a religious duty and wants his children to continue serving this cause.

An increasing practice is to establish an executive committee or advisory board, which oversees a *madrassa*'s management and the appointment of its head. However, there is no standard set of administrative regulations, and policies differ from school to school.

- In many leading *madrassas*, new methods are being used for organizing their administration. In the past, there was no system of entry test, and any tests given were not well organized. Now there is a proper announcement for admission, and candidates must submit certain documents. In most leading *madrassas*, admission tests are conducted, and there is a very tough competition for entry. The testing has produced competent and hardworking students, and an overall improvement in educational standards.⁵ Admission standards for *takhassus* (a specialization that is considered equivalent to postgraduate study) are high, and at many schools an 80 percent is mandatory on the entry test. In almost all the leading *madrassas*, and many medium-level *madrassas*, computerized records of the students are maintained, including

⁴ The graduates of Jamia Ashrafia, Lahore, are teaching in a number of private and government universities in Lahore. The graduates of Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi; and Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi; are performing their counseling and training services in banks and financial institutions.

⁵ Entry tests evaluate not only the educational capabilities of the students but also their character and interests.

procedures for students who want to go on leave. There are also separate departments for international students and their unique concerns.⁶ These trends show developing professional attitudes in the administration of these *madrassas*.

Similarly, in many *madrassas* there is a proper system of taking attendance; putting daily attendance reports on notice boards; maintaining monthly, quarterly, biannual, and annual reports; and informing parents about their children's performance.⁷ Many *madrassas* now require uniforms.⁸ Benches and desks are being introduced in primary and middle-level classes, so students no longer need to sit on the floor.

- Despite improved management, *madrassas* are facing a severe lack of space and accommodation. Many rooms are being used for students' instruction and residence, and they are often overcrowded. Some rooms do not have enough sunlight and ventilation, and some *madrassas* must use the same hall for prayer, dinner, and study.

However, many leading *madrassas* in this study have made significant improvements. The grounds, buildings, and libraries of some are better than some of Pakistan's private universities.⁹ Most *madrassas* have built dorms, and have appointed live-in wardens to supervise the students. Some *madrassas* have established dispensaries and arranged for doctors to provide health care facilities to their students. Construction projects for dorms with modern amenities are high on the priority list of many *madrassa* administrators, but the funds are not available.

For those with the funds to upgrade facilities, inadequate planning is a serious obstacle. Construction often continues while students are in residence. There are also frequent alterations in plans: washrooms are built and then demolished and relocated, and residential blocks are demolished for building shops. The probable causes of this are interruptions in resource flows and advisors who are not professional builders.

- Free education, accommodation, food, health care, and books have been a tradition in *madrassas* for a long time. Poor and rich alike have received these benefits, but new trends are emerging. The prospectus of Jamia Salfia (Faisalabad) emphasizes gradually doing away with this practice. Some leading *madrassas* ask students from financially stable families to contribute to their educational and residential costs. One *madrassa*'s materials state: "The accommodation and food for the students are provided from *zakaat* (charity), so financially stable students are advised to deposit their monthly expenses." Many middle-class and upper-middle-class families are willing

⁶ One such example is Jamia-ul-Uloom Al-Islamia, Banori Town, Karachi.

⁷ In the office of Mufti Naeem of Jamia Banoria Al-Alamia, Karachi, there are two television sets with closed circuit cameras for administrating the *madrassa*, and he uses a microphone while issuing directions to the teachers or students.

⁸ In most cases, a white dress (*shalwar qameez*) is now compulsory.

⁹ Such as Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi; Jamia Banori Town, Karachi; and Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi.

to pay the expenses of sending their children to a *madrassa*,¹⁰ in part because of changes in the schools' philosophies, systems, and syllabi. "It is not necessary that a student of religious institution performs the duties of Imams or Khatibs of a mosque or becomes a religious teacher,"^[9] says one religious scholar who wants to introduce electrical/electronics, mobile phone repair, and computer courses.

Madrassas used to publish handbills and pamphlets asking wealthy people to assist them. While this still continues, a number of *madrassas* are producing impressive prospectuses, and some even publish these in multiple languages.¹¹

- In general, *madrassas* lack financial resources, and most administrators interviewed for this study acknowledge that instead of developing permanent sources of income, they must depend on aid, *zakaat*, and, in some cases, the hides of sacrificed animals. One reason for this reliance on charity is the concern that if *madrassas* start businesses, their priorities may get confused, and they may pay more attention to commerce than education.

Nevertheless, because of the changing environment and the establishment of many other welfare organizations that depend on the same charity sources, many leading *madrassas* have started small economic and business activities.¹² While *madrassas* are well aware of the practice of *waqf* (endowment), and of its being a main source of income for many institutions in the past, only a few leading *madrassas* have established *waqfs* and meet their expenses through the generated income.

Normally, *madrassa* teachers are poorly paid and sometimes suffer financially in later life. Some leading *madrassas* have started offering loans and pensions for teachers and other employees, and many cite improving teachers' salary packages as part of future plans.

Academic and Educational Affairs

Teacher selection, teaching methods, courses, syllabi, and teacher training workshops are in a continuous state of evolution in *madrassas*. Many new offerings and initiatives—modern

¹⁰ Sixty percent of students in Jamia Islamia, Rawalpindi, are day scholars. The children of elite families are also studying in Jamia Muhammadiyah, Lahore; Jamia Rizviya, Lahore; and Jamia Ashrafia, Lahore. "Providing a standard atmosphere and environment in *madrassas* for financially stable families" is part of a short-term goal written in the prospectus of Jamia Salfia, Islamabad. These examples show the growing trend of children from stable families coming to *madrassas* for their studies, as well as the goal of providing better facilities to the students on the part of the schools.

¹¹ Such as Al-Markaz-al-Islami, Bannu; Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi; and Jamia Arabia Ahsan-ul-Uloom, Karachi.

¹² Jamia Banoria, Karachi, is worth mentioning here. This *madrassa* has established a high-standard restaurant, marriage hall, and shopping complex that has become the main source of income for the *madrassa*. Similarly, Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi; Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi; and Jamia Al-Uloom-ul-Islamia have also started economic activities. Jamia Mansoorah, Sindh, has in its possession 1,300 acres of land, which provides a handsome income. However, the income is still not sufficient to meet the expenditures and other requirements of these *madrassas*.

languages, extracurricular activities, modern educational institutes, women's education, and a growing emphasis on research and specialization—are becoming part of the *madrassa* system:

- The survey of leading *madrassa* administrators and affiliated boards suggests they have begun changing their syllabi. This is quite obvious at some places and less advanced at others.¹³ One administrator spoke of removing unnecessary books from the syllabus, modernizing the teaching of the Qur'an and books of *hadith*, and bringing the syllabi of the school and the board in line.^[10] Another said that textbook notes needed to be revised in view of the contemporary context, as they were not comprehensible to modern students.^[11]
- In some *madrassas*, economics, political science, and comparative study of religions are included in the syllabus. Guest lectures by specialists are offered on many subjects,¹⁴ as are short courses/programs on Islamic trade, Islamic law, and family laws. One purpose of these courses is to draw educated people, businessmen, and the public to the schools.
- In most *madrassas*, teachers are selected from the graduating students. Induction depends on the personal relationship between student and administrator, the student's ability, and the administrator's opinion of the student's interest in teaching. Although the importance of a teacher in any education system can hardly be overemphasized, in this system its significance is much higher. The credibility and the status of *madrassas* are always associated with their faculty. In spite of putting so much emphasis on competent teachers, there is no arrangement for teacher training in most *madrassas*. Nevertheless, all the leading *madrassas* realize the need for teacher training, and there are some programs in the works.¹⁵
- In most cases, the teaching style is still conventional, but it is changing in a number of leading *madrassas*. More progressive teachers use modern techniques to make their lectures more effective.¹⁶ Students are encouraged to ask questions, which was not common in the past. Physical punishments have also been reduced, particularly in *madrassas* located in cities.

¹³ In the second quarter of 2007, a convention of the scholars of Jamia Ashrafia, Lahore, was organized, in which one session was dedicated to assessment of the need to reform institutions' syllabi. Similarly, Jamia Faridia, Sahiwal, and some other *madrassas* publish books written by their teachers and teach them in their institutes.

¹⁴ A few examples are Jamia Imdadia, Faisalabad, and Jamia Nusrat-ul-Uloom, Gujranwala.

¹⁵ The endeavor of Jamia Al-Rasheed in this regard is particularly worth noting. Its special training program has achieved considerable acceptance and popularity among *madrassas*. *Madrassa* teachers from all over the country participate in this course, and they have achieved noteworthy results.

¹⁶ Jamia Al-Rasheed, Jamia Ashraf-ul-Madaras, and Dar-ul-Uloom in Karachi and Jamia Usmania in Peshawar are among those *madrassas* using new teaching aids, such as multimedia.

- While there is an impression that *madrassa* students are not good in contemporary subjects, students in leading institutions are encouraged to appear at outside exams,¹⁷ where they compete with mainstream students. Although contemporary education is still limited in most *madrassas*, there are examples of *madrassa* students getting higher positions on exams than other students.¹⁸

Many *madrassas* have started providing guidance to their best students for admission to colleges and universities. *Madrassas* often bear the expenses of higher education for these students, and hope they will return to the *madrassas* to work. In this way, *madrassas* are benefiting from the experiments and experiences of institutes of contemporary education. In the past, teachers considered *Dars-e-Nizami* (an eight-year course that starts in the 10th grade; the end result is considered the equivalent of an MA) and *takhassus* sufficient qualifications for teaching in a *madrassa*, but younger teachers are eager to pursue college and graduate studies.

- There is also an improvement of attitude toward other schools of thought. Almost all the leading *madrassas* encourage their top students to study books from other schools of thought, and many have these books in their libraries, where all students may freely access them. Moreover, there are limited instances of students from other schools of thought being allowed admission, such as the Shiite who was allowed to enter a *madrassa* of the Deobund school of thought in Bahawalpur. This is still uncommon, and in most cases a student will not be issued a degree if he belongs to another school of thought.
- Research and specialization are among the top priorities of the heads of the *madrassas* who were interviewed in the survey. Some *madrassas* are also encouraging their teachers toward research by providing an honorarium for their endeavors and arranging for their articles to be published in academic journals.¹⁹ The topics of research, however, usually pertain to traditional religious issues. Among the exceptions is Jamia Al-Markaz-ul-Islami, Bannu, which has been holding conferences for many years on jurisprudence which include discussion of society's contemporary issues. In order to improve the system of education and research activities, most leading *madrassas*

¹⁷ Matriculation, higher secondary, and bachelor's classes are regularly held in Jamia Usmania, Peshawar; Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi; Jamia Naemia, Lahore; and Jamia Mansoorah, Lahore; among others.

¹⁸ There are many such examples. A student of Jamia Al-Uloom, Multan, achieved second position in the examination of the Multan Board (Arts Group) several years ago. Similarly, another student of the same *madrassa* achieved first position in the Multan Board in 2006. Recently, two students from Jamia Ahya-ul-Uloom, Bahawalpur, achieved first and second positions in MPhil. Students of Idara Uloom Ul Islami, Muree Road, Rawalpindi, regularly rank in matriculation and intermediate examinations conducted by the Rawalpindi Board.

¹⁹ Jamia Salfia, Islamabad, has made it compulsory for their teachers to write at least one research article in a year.

have decided to expand their libraries and research centers.²⁰ Considerable resources are being spent on new books.²¹ However, English magazines and journals are still few and far between in these libraries, and cataloguing in most cases is not carried out in a scientific way.

- Another trend involves extracurricular activities. There was a time when activities such as speech contests and quiz competitions were considered a waste of time. Most leading *madrassas* now emphasize that they are striving to develop the well-rounded personality of their students, who are increasingly provided with playing grounds, even in far-flung, rural areas.²² Where grounds are not available because of limited resources and lack of open space, students are encouraged to take part in sports on nearby grounds.²³ Volleyball, football, and cricket are played in almost every *madrassa*. Morning assembly and exercise are also being instituted.²⁴

Speech contests are held in most leading *madrassas*, and some²⁵ provide their students with proper training for public speaking and debating.²⁶ Schools prefer educational and topical themes over traditional ones, and encourage logical and educated discourse rather than emotional speeches. The selection of different topics for international conferences and programs organized by *madrassas* reflects a movement from sectarian emphasis to global and regional issues.²⁷ For example, the topics of the annual All Pakistan Speech Contest, organized by Jamia Rizvia²⁸ (of the Brelvi school of thought), are similar to those of Jamia Salfia (of the Ahl-e-Hadith school of thought).

²⁰ Jamia Khair-ul-Madaris, Multan, is one such institute that is planning to establish a formal center for carrying out research on contemporary issues and providing guidance in this regard.

²¹ The library of Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi, is considered to be the largest, whereas Jamia Farooqia and Jamia Banoria, Karachi; Jamia Rizvia, Rawalpindi; Dar-ul-Uloom Al-Islamia, Lahore; Nusrat-ul-Uloom, Gujranwala; Jamia Ashrafia, Lahore; and Jamia Khair-ul-Madaris, Multan; have purchased a large number of books on various topics in the last few years.

²² Such as in Dar-ul-Uloom, Hangu, Northwest Frontier Province.

²³ A swimming pool has been constructed in Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi. The students of Jamia Ashraf-ul-Madaris, Karachi, are receiving martial arts training from a national champion. The administration also has plans of constructing a swimming pool on the roof of the *madrassa*.

²⁴ Jamia Noria Rizvia has hired a retired head constable for the morning exercise. Jamia Faridia, Sahiwal; Jamia Islamia, DG Khan; Jamia Abi Bakar, Karachi; and Ihya-ul-Uloom, Bahawalpur; also start their educational activities with assembly in the morning.

²⁵ Such as Jamia Naemia, Lahore; Jamia Ameeniah Naqshbandia, Gujranwala; and Jamia Rizvia, Lahore.

²⁶ Jamia Imdadia, Faisalabad, is planning to construct a function hall in the middle of Faisalabad City for the organization of big events, such as speech contests and awareness programs.

²⁷ For example, the schedule of seminar week “Knowledge and Awareness” at the end of the first term of the year in Jamia Salfia, Islamabad, is quite interesting. A few topics of the seminar are “Madaris [*madrassas*]: Torch Bearer of Humanitarian Services or the Centres of Terrorism,” “The Dawah and Dissemination of the Quran and Sunnah in Europe,” and “Medical Sciences and Quran and Sunnah.”

²⁸ Previous topics of Jamia Rizvia’s “All Pakistan Speech Contest” include “Why is America Afraid of

- Many *madrassas* have strong writing and language programs. Magazines are published to improve students' journalistic capabilities.²⁹ Some publish magazines in English, and one publishes in three languages: Urdu, Arabic, and English.³⁰ Some *madrassas* also publish online *fatawas* (jurisprudential decrees) as well as lectures and papers online.³¹
- Publication of monthly magazines, interest in journalism, establishment of think forums, participation in TV programs, and planning for the establishment of radio and TV channels show an increased understanding of the significance of media. *Madrassas* included in the study often mention getting assistance from experts and donors. Survey respondents also indicated an interest in the fields of information technology, web development, and other technologies.
- The trend of learning foreign languages is also growing significantly. Many leading *madrassas* consider fluency in other languages a benchmark and plan to develop language courses in the near future. Those that have already begun, by hiring teachers and purchasing language-learning aids, have been reasonably successful. Some *madrassas* have set up sound-proof and air-conditioned language labs no different from those of any modern institute.³² The interest in foreign languages is not confined to English. Spanish is already being taught in Jamia Ashraf-ul-Madaris, Karachi, and Chinese and French are being considered. Many graduates from such *madrassas* are serving abroad in Europe and America.
- The heads of leading *madrassas* approached during this research appear to be especially interested in establishing modern education institutes where learning the Qur'an by heart, translation of the Qur'an and selected hadiths, and contemporary education (in some instances O Levels and A Levels) would take place alongside each other, with many classes conducted in English. The Deoband and Ahl-e-Hadith schools of thought are most prominent in these efforts. The existing schools of this kind are progressing quite successfully. The fee structure in these schools is low compared to other such education institutes.³³

Madrassa?," "Madaris: the Largest Network of NGO," "Islam: the Guarantor of Global Peace," "Tauheed and Prophethood in the West and the Responsibilities of Muslim Ummah."

²⁹ Practical examples of this trend can be observed in Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi; and Jamia Naeemia, Lahore.

³⁰ Such as Al-Farooq (Jamia Farooqia, Karachi), Truth (Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi), and Al-Blagh International (Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi)

³¹ Such as Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi; Jamia Banoria, Karachi; Jamia Ashrafia, Lahore; and Jamia Rizwia Zia-ul-Uloom, Rawalpindi.

³² For example, Jamia Ashraf-ul-Madaris's, Karachi; Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi; and Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi. Jamia Usmania, Peshawar, is planning to establish an institute of the English language.

³³ Jamia Ahsan-al-Aloom, Karachi; Jamia Mansoorah, Sindh; Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi; Jamia Hamadia, Karachi; Jamia Haqania, Akora Khatak; Jamia Khair-ul-Madaris, Multan; and Jamia Al-Markaz Al-Islami, Bannu;

Women's and Girls' Education

The establishment of *madrassas* for women's education is worth commenting on separately. As in other spheres of life, women's education was not a priority in the past. Changing international dynamics; the focus of international organizations on women's education; criticism of the low literacy rate among women in Muslim societies; and movements such as feminism, women's empowerment, and the economic independence of women have caused Muslim societies to respond in educational, philosophical, and practical fields.

Parents of girls are more inclined than in the past to provide their daughters with education. There is also a general perception that the environment in the mainstream education system has not been developed on the basis of the sociocultural traditions of society. Against this backdrop, there is a tendency, particularly among religious people, to consider *madrassas* a more appropriate choice for girls. Demands that *madrassas* provide for girls have motivated sponsors and administrators to reallocate resources for women's education.

Considering this national and international focus, many leading *madrassas* have established separate branches for women. They have also introduced course changes to meet the specific needs of women. Most importantly, an eight-year *Dars-e-Nizami* course has been reduced to four years,³⁴ which has further attracted women and their parents toward a *madrassa* education. The debate about effectiveness of the reduced course is still going on, and it is expected that *madrassas* may increase the course length. There are also instances of women who have graduated from mainstream schools being admitted to *madrassas*, particularly those from religious families.

Madrassas with programs for girls report that despite having fewer facilities, girls are outperforming their male counterparts.³⁵ The standard of questions raised in class by girls, and their interest and participation in lessons, are of better quality. After graduating, most of these women return to their hometowns to teach. *Madrassas* still lag behind in the area of women's education, in part because there are very few women teachers for girls.

have established such *madrassas*, and they have maintained a high standard of education in them. Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi, has started establishing schools in Karachi, and intends to set up similar schools in other cities in the next few years.

³⁴ *Dars-e-Nizami*, a course designed by Mulla Nizamuddin Firanghi Mahali, is used as the standard curriculum in many *madrassas* across South Asia. Key features of the course include a holistic curriculum with subjects such as mathematics, astronomy, medicine, philosophy, logic, geography, literature, and chemistry, as well as the Qur'an, *hadith*, *fiqh*, and Sufism. Graduates of the program are able to move onto higher studies and careers in a variety of fields.

³⁵ In Jamia Ahsan-ul-Uloom, Karachi, and Jamia Usmania, Peshawar, girls are fewer in number than boys and study in separate classes, meaning that boys have direct interaction with the teachers and girls do not. However, girls are also securing first positions in exams.

Outreach

The omnipresence of media, especially electronic media, have made *madrassas* reconsider avoiding it, as had been their practice traditionally. Debate about the permissibility of appearing on electronic media is ongoing, with as many in favor as opposed,³⁶ but the use of the Internet and CDs is becoming quite common in leading *madrassas*. In many, online programs for issuing *fatawas* have been introduced.³⁷

There is also noticeable progress in welfare activities by leading *madrassas*, which are undertaken to provide services and attract people to religion.³⁸ For example, welfare organizations administered by *madrassas* worked on rehabilitation and reconstruction in the areas of Azad Kashmir and the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) after the 2005 earthquake. The expressed goal of these projects is to achieve the will of Allah while increasing the number of religious-minded people in society. *Madrassas* that have not yet taken the initiative have plans to establish free dispensaries and hospitals.

Providing guidance on day-to-day matters has remained an important aspect of the work of *madrassas*, and leading *madrassas* have a system of issuing large numbers of *fatawa*, sometimes reaching more than 300 a month. The number of questions about religious matters asked in person or by phone is usually more than that. Most *madrassas* keep a record of these decrees and some publish them in their magazines.

People often seek out *madrassas* to act as mediators in social and financial disputes. The two main reasons *madrassas* get involved are to help people avoid complex, costly, and long court procedures; and because of people's desires to seek guidance that follows the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah. In fact, *madrassas* in many areas of the NWFP and Baluchistan also issue verdicts on *faujdari* (civil) crimes that are accepted by the people.³⁹

³⁶ Interview with Maulana Adnan Kakakhel from Jamia Al-Rasheed, Karachi. Similarly, the head of Jamia Banoria Almiah, Karachi, Mufti Naeem, and other teachers of his *madrassa*, openly speak in favor of electronic media. They also participate in religious programs on private TV channels. Leading scholars such as Mufti Muhammad Taqi Usmani, Maulana Muhammad Rafi Usmani, and others have also started appearing on TV programs in recent years.

³⁷ For example Jamia Ashrafia, Lahore; Dar-ul-Uloom, Karachi; and Jamia Hamadia, Karachi.

³⁸ Jamia Husnia, located in an underdeveloped area of Sindh, Shahdad Pur, has established an eye hospital and dispensary, and has plans to expand its welfare activities in the future. Similarly, the heads of Jamia Hamadia, Karachi, and many other *madrassas*, are also running welfare projects. A hospital has been established in Jamia Uloom Al-Sharia, Rawalpindi, with four specialist doctors. Jamia Al-Muntazir, Lahore, has established a free dispensary and is providing ambulance service. Jamia Rizvia, Rawalpindi, under the supervision of Zia-ul-Uloom Kifalah, has collected millions of rupees, which were delivered to the victims of earthquakes and used to build mosques, *madrassas*, and shelter homes.

³⁹ Jamia Fahmedia Ghausia, Peshawar, has performed the role of mediator in some very serious matters related to the tribal areas. Such examples are not confined to the Frontier or Baluchistan. In cities such as Karachi, people contact Mufti Zar Wali Khan of Jamia Ahsan-ul-Uloom; Dr. Abdur Razzaq Sikandar of Jamia

Conclusion

Although this survey was carried out in the leading *madrassas* of Pakistan, *madrassas* in South Asia share a similar history and structure. Trends in *madrassas* throughout the region would not be much different from those discussed in this study. The survey showed that the response of *madrassas* to international criticism and debate regarding them has been guarded. Confidence in their system predominates. *Madrassas* have deep roots in society and are not ready to compromise independence and autonomy, or to eliminate their basic character.

In view of the needs and opportunities of a changing society, heads of leading *madrassas* indicate their desire to play more effective and far-reaching roles. In spite of differences in schools of thought, the survey found no considerable differences in the thinking of leading *madrassa* administrators or religious education boards toward introducing changes. The Deoband school of thought appears to have taken a comparative lead in implementing changes. Some institutes of Ahl-e-Hadith, Brelvi, and Shiite schools of thought have also set good examples.

Although there is widespread desire for change, movement in that direction is slow. The survey responses suggest that this is mostly because of the lack of adequate human and financial resources. The availability of resources from trusted sponsors could spur the process of taking initiatives and act as a catalyst in building confidence for change among *madrassas*.

Another dimension is the greater implementation of modern changes in the *madrassas* of big cities, especially Lahore, Karachi, Rawalpindi, and Islamabad. In these cities, many new and grand religious institutions have been built, and some older institutions have established new practices. People in bigger cities naturally possess a wider perspective, and acquiring financial resources is often easier.

A deeper analysis of the findings shows that there are two distinct groups among *madrassa* leaders. One is proactive in taking initiatives: employing modern communication tools and information technology, introducing new fields of knowledge, and conducting experiments in administration and training. The other group is more hesitant because of limited resources or personal reservations. Typically, the younger generation of religious leaders is more vibrant and active in experimenting, while the older prefers traditional approaches.

What will be the role of *madrassas* in South Asia in the future? While they are on the right path, change is not keeping up with the fast pace of globalization and its effects on the region's societies. In order to play a dynamic and effective role, *madrassas* need to be proactive and visionary, and reach out to the world.

Al-Uloom Al-Islamia, Banori Town, Karachi; Dr. Adil Khan of Jamia Farooqia, Karachi; Mufti Naeem of Jamia Banoria, Karachi; and Mufti Muneeb-ur-Rahman of Jamia Naeemia, Karachi; not only for the *aaili* (family) issues, but also for disputes related to business.



Interpreting the Trends

Faith, Justice, and Violence: Islam in Political Context

Amit Pandya

Introduction: Muslim Renewal and Western Understanding

The difficult encounter between the Muslim world and the West at the level of security policy, diplomacy, and politics is complicated by cultural and ideological tension, and a degree of intellectual incomprehension. Western concerns about violence and political extremism in the Muslim world, and their impact on the security of the West, often rest on assumptions about the philosophical, cultural, and intellectual character of Islamic thought and Islamist political movements. Muslim concerns about Palestine, Western geostrategy and oil policy, and Western support to autocratic regimes are often accompanied by similar assumptions.

Mainstream Western commentary on these issues has overstated the importance of culture and religion as factors in Muslim anti-Western sentiment. We should acknowledge that other equally important factors are at work. These include a clash of objective interests, a sharp debate about what political objectives should be pursued, and a divergent understanding of the objective world, of the meaning of the principal trends observed in world affairs, and of the intentions of the key actors. These would remain sources of contention between the Muslim world and the West even were there not a high degree of mutual suspicion about the philosophical, cultural, and intellectual character of the other.

It is in Western discussions of political mobilizations on the basis of Islam and the place of violence in Islamic thought that security policy and interest in ideological trends converge most closely. This paper, in discussing the ideological context of these issues in the Muslim world, cautions against simplistic understandings because of the complexity and richness of intellectual developments there.

The Muslim world today is struggling with modernization, and with the relationship among the local, traditional, and global. Muslim societies are grappling with economic development, effective governance, corruption, and democratic mobilization against dictatorships or entrenched elites. These challenges have given rise to a rich intellectual life. This includes contestations over the reach of religious faith into the public realm, regional

Terminology

The adjective “Islamic” is often used to describe what characterizes the societies and customs of Muslim communities (for which the adjective “Muslim” is more appropriate), rather than more precisely ideas, values, and cultural norms specifically associated with or proceeding from Islam as a religion. One is a term of religious group identification, while the other is a term that refers to an intellectual, legal, and theological tradition grounded in faith. All institutional, social, cultural, and political elements of the Muslim world or the work of Muslims can be described as “Muslim.” “Islamic” is a term that should describe a body of religiously based thought or worldly discourse framed explicitly by reference to that body of thought. Although the two are of course closely interwoven, it is helpful to be clear about their distinction, particularly when it comes to political discourse.

Thus many features of ideology and cultural practice that may reflect national histories or regional traditions are misperceived as reflecting Islamic precept. That Muslims often also use the terms “Muslim” and “Islamic” interchangeably compounds the confusion. When Muslim intellectuals deliberately seek to assume the authority of religion to validate what may in fact be merely the social customs and values of people who are also adherents of Islam, the West’s semantic confusion amounts to acquiescence in an ideological strategy of legitimization. Not all that professes to be Islamic, or is carelessly described as such, is necessarily so; it may be actuated less by religious than political purposes, or it may be an accident of cultural history rather than a precept of Islam.

Equally careless is the interchangeable and imprecise Western use of terms such as “extremist” or “radical” in discussion of Islam and the Muslim world, and the elliptical association of these with violence and reflexive anti-Westernism. Such sloppy conflation is tendentious: these have become normative terms—moralistic dismissals of the legitimacy of those positions—rather than dispassionate ways of characterizing religious, philosophical, or political positions on a spectrum. The latter would demand articulation of a counterargument. The former seems not to. Yet the failure to do anything but condemn presumptively means that the substantive grievances, arguments, and political agendas go unanswered.

Particularly troubling is the Western use of the term “moderate.” This is applied by Westerners to autocratic regimes that are anything but moderate in their political behavior and their denial of political and civil rights to their citizens: that are in fact “extreme” in their repressiveness.* “Moderate” is also a term of approbation of pro-Western political agendas, not useful in understanding the

variations in the ways that Islamic thought bears the marks of its cultural and historical contexts, and secular discourse on global political issues that are shared with the non-Muslim world, such as climate change and migration. What may appear to outsiders as merely opposition to the West, based on a sense of grievance, is experienced from the inside as a Muslim renaissance, a renewal of thought and culture, an aspiration to development and modernization without loss of identity.¹

¹ In this respect, the Muslim renewal resembles the various Chinese modernization movements at the turn of the last century; where anti-Western nativism sentiment jostled with movements to find a uniquely Chinese

nuances and imperfect correspondences of religious thought and political ideology within the Muslim world.* *

“Fundamentalist,” “radical,” “extremist,” “militant,” or “moderate” are not, properly speaking, nouns but adjectives. It is important to specify what they qualify. Are we speaking of extremism or radicalism or moderation in the reading of religious texts, or in critiques of social arrangements, or critiques of political systems, or in the proclivity to use violence? What precisely do we mean by reflexive use of the term “militant”? Here is a term that has been used in recent secular discourse (in Western trade union movements and in European political parties) to describe unyielding, principled, or purist approaches to political practice. How has this come to be applied to groups that are variously or an aggregation of insurgent, terrorist, or ideologically extremist?

And why should “fundamentalism” in religion (in the precise sense of a return to fundamentals or to original texts) necessarily imply any particular approach to political or social ideology, or to political action? For example, Salafi properly speaking describes a puritan and fundamentalist theology. That theology may in some cases inspire political zealots who are also willing to engage in violence against the state, and sometimes against innocents. However, Salafi teaching does not require or compel such violence, and such violence is as often inspired by other ideologies or by practical grievances. At the very least this type of conflation of the theological, the ideological, and the political leads to imprecision of thought and discourse. Such imprecision in turn leads to imprecise and ill-conceived policy.

The confusion in terminology seems to spring from fear and anxiety. We should avoid allowing our understandable concern with violence directed against the West, and against innocents in Muslim societies as well as outside, to cloud our understanding of the precise sources of militancy, radicalism, political extremism, and hostility to Western culture. The fact that these stances are often also shared by perpetrators of violence and terrorism does not therefore render all anti-Western militants or radicals terrorist sympathizers.

* Secularism has suffered discredit by its association with despotic regimes under Western sponsorship.

** Syria is rightly condemned as extremist by Western governments for its positions on international relations, its internal political repressiveness, and its support for armed political movements abroad. Yet it also evinces a moderation in its religious tolerance.

Where we do acknowledge the importance of religious thought to political developments in the Muslim world, it is important to be precise about the contours of that relationship. It is also important to recognize that the conjunction of faith and politics reflects a global trend. Religion and its cultural influences may be more significant in Muslim societies than in any other part of the world. However, religion is important as much for its support for specific social and political (sometimes covertly political) agendas. Islamism runs the

cultural model as a basis of modernization and political and economic parity with the West. And the failure of Western understanding of the Muslim renewal resembles that which met those movements.

gamut of ideology and political action. Some movements are marked principally by anti-Western sentiment, others by reformist political organization, and yet others by revolutionary mobilization. Some will practice violence, others embrace it in principle, while others merely tolerate it.

When political aspirations are articulated in religious and cultural terms, it is important to unpack and separate the political, the religious, and the cultural. We might first distinguish elements of religious discourse that relate to faith from those that are essentially political debates. We should also be clear that the appeal to Islam is variously and distinctly to identity, custom, ritual, and faith, and to values about the ordering of society. Each component has implications for public life and the practice of politics. Only thus will one appreciate the specific and varied ways in which “Islam” addresses political, economic, or social conflicts, or allays psychological anxieties born of modernization or of the bewilderingly rapid pace of change, or serves as an instrument for spiritual growth.²

And we might remind ourselves that almost every religious and cultural feature observed in the Muslim world—the growth in religiosity, the emphasis on external symbols of religious identity, the promotion of political agendas based on religious sources of intellectual authority, and a sense of cultural renewal—finds its counterpart in non-Muslim societies.

Unfortunately, there will be those on both sides who will justify the worst fears of the other. Many Muslims do in fact have deep hostility toward the West and believe, more on the basis of religious zeal than religious education, that terrorism is a form of *jihad*. Their counterparts in the West are only too willing to countenance extreme (and counterproductive) measures against the Muslim world, believing that Islam does indeed justify and rationalize hatred and violence against non-Muslims.

The question of *jihad* is central, both in Islam’s understanding of itself and in the corresponding anxiety in the West about its justification of anti-Western violence. Islam is uniquely a religion based on mobilization.³ The emphasis of its founding community was organization for social action and opposition to primitive customs and tribal divisions, albeit on a spiritual basis. Whether or not this makes Islam’s interactions with others confrontational in practice, the oppositional stance itself is likely to give rise to non-Muslim anxieties and perceptions of confrontation. Where the appeal is to a sense of justice against unequal and autocratic political and economic orders, and accompanied by reference to *jihad*, the sense of confrontation will be most acute.

² To unpack is not to suggest that there is no interrelationship. As the “religious right” in the United States has shown piety, and the sense of loyalty and identity based upon it, is receptive to the appeals of political movements. Islamist political movements appeal to pious Muslims to do their duty.

³ This might be contrasted with the principal emphases of other major religions on group identity (Judaism, Hinduism) or spiritual identity (Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism).

This paper attempts to provide an understanding of the role of Islam in politics, and to examine the place of *jihad* and related issues of political mobilization in Muslims' understanding of their core religious duty. Its purpose is to deepen communication and mutual understanding between a sometimes anxious West and an equally anxious Muslim world.

Political Contestation and Religious Ideology

Struggle for Justice

Often overlooked is the extent to which varieties of anti-Western sentiment in the Muslim world are actually critiques of the economic and social dimensions of the global order, similar to non-Muslim political ideologies. To many Muslims, the phrase "Islamic law and justice" refers not to harsh penal sanctions, but to exercising constraint on rulers, a mechanism that in theory ensures justice for all. The phrase is a cognate of Western notions of "the rule of law." In many large Muslim societies, including Egypt, Indonesia, and Pakistan, religious thinkers have articulated responses based in Islamic law to government corruption and the chronic effects of economic crisis. The broader aspirations of the Muslim world are reflected not only in a cultural struggle against a culturally and religiously hostile and uncomprehending West. They also reflect protest at an unjust and unequal global order, considered unjust in the economic and political arrangements between societies and nations and within autocratic Muslim societies, the latter most often sponsored and protected by the West.

"They are more Islamic than us," says a Bangladeshi intellectual about Western welfare states such as those of Scandinavia. Many Islamists speak of the need for a moral revolution against a highly aggressive corporate capitalism, even while other Islamists excoriate socialism and extol the virtues of markets as a shared value with the West. In the Philippines, Islamist parties worry about failing at the polls because their promotion of an Islamic economic and social agenda is mistaken by many voters for a socialist or communist platform. The concern about their political platforms being mistaken for secular ones underlines two points. Muslims are concerned with issues of social justice that concern non-Islamists as well; yet there is a specifically Islamic world view that eschews a sense of identification or solidarity with those others.

Progressive Muslim intellectuals, seeking to correct Western misperceptions about what the Muslim revival really consists of, often emphasize principles found in the Quran and other sources of religious authority: women's empowerment, equitable distribution of wealth, opposition to monarchy, and other egalitarian principles. The essential duties of a Muslim relating to tithes, alms, and fasting are seen to bolster the message of social and economic justice. The first two embody the redistributive principle, and the latter encourages empathetic solidarity with the hungry and the poor. One is reminded often that the earliest

adherents of Islam were women, freedmen, servants, slaves, and lesser “weak” clans; that this was a community of oppressed persons, explicitly opposed to the wealthy and powerful.

In this discourse, the terms “neo-liberal” and “neo-colonial” recur liberally and are often used interchangeably. According to this school of thought, the Muslim world is “targeted” by the West not because it is Muslim but because it is weak. In this view, Islamic ideologies are not seeking to opt out of or stand against globalization. They believe there is an alternative global community of which the Muslim world is a more enthusiastic participant: a global community characterized by street power, mass mobilizations, antiwar protests, and gatherings such as the World Social Forum. The Muslim world, in this view, is athwart the long-range Western agenda of dominating the world’s natural and technical resources.

There is a strong line of argument among some Islamist movements that seeks to make Islam the champion of a global movement promoting justice for all, including non-Muslim “oppressed groups.” In some guises, this argument emphasizes the ideological tools provided by Islamic precept for the liberation of mankind. In others it adopts a more pragmatic stance of common cause with already mobilized groups. In yet others, it appeals to secular popular grievance and resistance principally as a tool for the victory of Islam in societies where Muslims are a minority. For example, the Students Islamic Movement of India, which has been blamed by the Indian government for recent terrorist bombings in Indian cities, seeks to position itself as the vanguard of an antistate movement to overthrow the current Indian state on behalf of victims of caste and other social and economic oppression, offering an Islamic India as a preferable alternative to the current political order. The Indian Jamaat-e-Islami has in recent years adopted a similar solidarity-based approach to political mobilization, albeit with a less revolutionary subversive thrust.

Professedly Islamic armed insurgent movements in the southern Philippines, southern Thailand, or Afghanistan-Pakistan border regions are seen by many Muslim and non-Muslim activists and analysts as reflecting common elements with communist, Maoist, and “Naxalite” rural insurgencies: a sense that traditional communities and ways of life are beleaguered by demographic encroachment, and by economic exploitation and environmental degradation by powerful outsiders.

Of course Islam fails to live up to its professed values of social liberation. So do other religious traditions, whose passionately held core principles (“Hindu tolerance” or “Christian love”) are often found lacking or incomplete in the practice of political mobilization. What is important is that within the Muslim world and the world of Islamic political theory, there is recognition of and debate about the extent to which the principles of justice enunciated above have been hijacked and violated. Muslim activists and thinkers engage in candid discussions about what should be the roles of women, monarchies, entrenched powers, theocracies and other elites, and aggressive nationalism. To focus only on Islam’s least

desirable features is to ignore the significant intellectual resources of social change and reform already at work in the Muslim world.

Violence and Terrorism

Jihad has often been described by Muslims and Islamic scholars as a core principal of Islamic faith and ethics. For its part, the West today is preoccupied with the threat of violence emanating from the Muslim world and sees *jihad* as the intellectual source of that problem. In effect, the West holds distinctly Islamic culture and ideas responsible for an existential threat. The combined effect of these two perceptions is highly toxic. Muslims take offense at the calumny that their religion promotes violence, while Western opinion consciously or otherwise blames Islam as a religion for its own sense of insecurity and unease.

This is the essence of the clash of civilizations. Political concerns poison cultural perception, and vice versa. It is necessary to carefully examine the nature of political violence in the Muslim world as well as the varieties of Muslim understanding of *jihad*.

The discussion of terrorism is perhaps the most obvious example of how confusion of the political and the cultural poisons perceptions and creates mutual ill will. The Muslim world sees a crude and simplistic understanding of terrorism in the West. The West perceives a permissiveness and tolerance of violence among substantial segments of Muslim opinion. Quite apart from the shaping of mutual perceptions, these fixed views are also central to the shaping of political, diplomatic, and military behavior on both sides.

Several factors lead many Muslims to discount Western concerns about the perceived tolerance of extremism in Muslim societies. Representative Muslim opinion considers the “global war on terror” a fig leaf for the political and economic goals of the West. Muslims note that terrorism is not the only significant form of political violence, and the West’s obsession with it obscures the pervasive violence found in Western societies and the extent to which Western states and private interests perpetrate violence in the Muslim world, and thereby spawn violence that is political in origin.⁴

A wide swath of Muslims objects to the term “Islamic terrorists,” which seems to associate terrorism with the religious tradition. Many find this even more offensive than pairing “terrorist” with group origin, as in “Muslim terrorist.” There is no corresponding use of terms such as “Hindu terrorist” or “Jewish terrorism,” despite the practice of majoritarian

⁴ Less than 10 percent of Muslims polled consider the use of force against civilians legitimate, compared to more than 20 percent of Americans. There is a high degree of consensus among Muslims that the West’s condemnation of “Islamic violence” must be discounted as hypocrisy because of the West’s silence on Israeli “state terrorism,” the possession of nuclear weapons by the major Western powers, the terrorism inherent in nuclear deterrence theory itself, and the perceived double standards embodied in UN resolutions.

Hindutva and Terrorism

Even as India reels under a spate of terrorist attacks likely perpetrated by Muslim or Islamist groups of various ideological hues, recent events suggest that the convergence of identity, religious ideology, and terrorism, and the acquiescence of cultural chauvinists in violence, extends to non-Muslim groups.

On the eve of the attention-catching terrorist attacks in Mumbai in late 2008, the Anti-Terrorist Squad (ATS) in Mumbai uncovered a terrorist cell involved in a bombing plot in Malegaon against the extremist Students Islamic Movement of India. This cell included religious activists and active duty and retired army officers who were also members of Hindutva organizations. In 2006, two members of Bajrang Dal died in a bomb-making incident elsewhere in Maharashtra State. Bajrang Dal is part of the Hindutva family of organizations that includes the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), the mainstream political voice of Hindu chauvinism. In mid- to late 2008, arrests were made of Hindus plotting bombing incidents in Maharashtra, or Hindus were killed in bomb-making accidents in Uttar Pradesh.

Earlier in 2008, a nativist Hindu-chauvinist leader in Mumbai, India's global city, had suggested the intriguing prospect of Hindus preparing to engage in suicide attacks for the defense of the community. Following the discovery of the Malegaon plot, leading figures in the BJP leapt to the defense of the plotters in various ways. The party suggested that the accusations were a calumny on Hindus, that Hindus were naturally immune to terrorism, and that the conspirators were framed on insufficient evidence. These arguments in defense were particularly ironic in view of the fact that the party had traditionally rushed to judgment on terrorist incidents allegedly carried out by Muslims, and had accused the Congress Party government of "mollycoddling" terrorists in order to appease Muslim opinion.

Those Indians, including Hindus, seeking to stem the tide of generalized anti-Muslim sentiment arising from terrorist incidents have long noted that the Muslim community in India has recently been "terrorized" by mob violence and by law enforcement, and administrative and judicial prejudice against Muslims (and now against other minorities including Christians). This wave is associated

violence or state terrorism against innocent civilians in India and Israel, or the practice of covert terrorism by the Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka.

Muslim societies appear to be quite self-critical of the violence intrinsic to some of their politics. There is widespread recognition that they must fight terrorism too, because the cultural, social, and traditional integrity of their societies is also threatened by it. However, they believe that they should make their own political judgments about the nature of the threat and the optimal response to it rather than responding to the anxious (and hypocritical) demands of the West.

Violence perpetrated by Muslims appears from within as the pursuit of political objectives, some legitimate and some not, rather than as the pursuit of religious or "Islamic" objectives.

closely with the political organizing and agenda of organizations associated with the BJP, which leads the opposition in the Indian Parliament.

The alleged conspirators of the Malegaon plot had come from an organization, Abhinav Bharat, which has an established historical pedigree in a little-known tradition of Hindutva terrorism. Although its current incarnation was founded in 2006, it bears the name of an organization that was founded in 1904 by V. D. Savarkar, the founder of Hindutva ideology and the Rashtriya Svayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Hindu Mahasabha, the mother organizations of the BJP.

Hindutva terrorism has at least as long a pedigree. The iconic Indian nationalist leader Bal Gangadhar (“Lokmanya”) Tilak embraced terrorist violence, modeled on anti-czarist terrorism in the Russian empire and anti-British terrorism in Ireland, as a means of national liberation. Among those drawn to his message were young Western-educated Hindus. At that time India’s Muslims remained immune to the allure of radical measures.

In one Abhinav Bharat manifesto, its followers vowed to “shed upon the earth the lifeblood of enemies who destroy religion,” while another militant journal considered murder of foreigners in India “not a sin but a [ritual sacrifice].” The first four decades of the 20th century saw many terrorist incidents in India resulting in deaths of civilian officials or innocent bystanders. None of these were perpetrated by Muslims.

While many Hindutva leaders have been forthright about their admiration of 20th century European fascism and of Adolf Hitler, Hindutva’s long pedigree of ideological justification for terrorism might bear further study.

Of course, none of this suggests a particular Hindu proclivity to terrorism, any more than there is a Muslim proclivity as believed by partisans of Hindutva. What does seem clear is that the embrace of terrorism reflects political circumstances and vicissitudes of a given historical period, not features innate to the culture or “mind” of one religious tradition or another.

Muslim political thinkers and analysts consider the Western view of violence in the Muslim world, and in Islamic thought, as ahistorical and normative. Muslims believe that this view thereby obscures the actual political, economic, and social roots of antistate violence. Traditions of violent resistance appear from within to be rooted in anticolonial struggles, or in resistance to indigenous oppression, not in anti-Western sentiment or religious faith. The extent to which violence is accepted as legitimate in contemporary Muslim societies depends on its perceived political causes.

In summary, the Muslim consensus is that if terrorism means resorting to violence against innocent civilians, then all forms of terrorism, individual, group, and state should be equally condemned. The issue of legitimacy and justness of the objectives as well as of the means used to combat terrorism are equally important and relevant.

Jihad, Justice, Mobilization, and Militancy

Opposing the facile assumption that the religious concept of *jihad* justifies political violence, Muslim exponents and Islamic scholars in speaking to non-Muslims have propounded the argument that *jihad* refers more properly to spiritual and moral struggle. This may be an equally facile misstatement of a more complex idea. The term does indeed appear to mean more than simply striving for spiritual and ethical improvement. We might perhaps say that even as a spiritual and ethical precept, the idea partakes of a characteristically Islamic refusal to separate the inner or personal and the social or political. Even if not a justification for violence, *jihad* does refer to struggle in the political world against the enemies of Allah and those who would harm the Muslim *ummah* (the worldwide Muslim community). At issue is the duty to mobilize against injustice and other threats, a duty of militant resistance. This relates *jihad* to the central importance of justice discussed above.

In this respect, it is of the highest importance that many Muslim intellectuals see mobilization as not only a central principle of Islam, but also as a distinguishing characteristic. Islam is seen as an intellectual and social tradition based neither on radical personal autonomy nor on authority and obedience. Thus the beneficial organization of an Islamic society is seen as requiring mobilization for common endeavor, based upon a common ideological understanding among its members.

To discuss *jihad* in terms of political mobilization and contestation, of practical day-to-day politics, can also explain why, despite the almost universal condemnation of terrorism in Muslim societies, attitudes toward political violence remain more ambiguous. Many Muslims accuse the West of the same in its attitudes to political violence, at least toward the Muslim world.

Muslims who categorically reject terrorism as a political and ideological distraction from the *jihad* of the struggle for social justice and equality nonetheless still reserve judgment about the use of violence against entrenched injustice. Many also embrace the notion of ideological war against the enemies of Islam, defined either as those who violate basic social justice (understood as a core Islamic precept applied to Muslims or non-Muslims), or those whose perpetration of injustice harms particular Muslim communities or the *ummah* as a whole. Others embrace the notion of unyielding struggle against non-Muslim ideologies in the conviction that only Islam can secure justice.

Army of God

The areas straddling the border of Afghanistan and Pakistan are the epitome—almost a caricature—of the confrontation between the West and Islam. The area is both a meeting of conflicting cultural systems and the epicenter of the “global war on terror.” This region

embodies almost all the West's anxieties about ideological developments in Islam and the security of the West. By most measures it is a highly conservative society suspicious of outsiders. It is also home to fundamentalist and anti-Western religious-political movements; indigenous and foreign armed groups devoted to war against regimes friendly to the West; and military training facilities and educational institutions that are attended by young Muslims from around the world and devoted to the waging of *jihad*, against not only non-Muslims but also against "bad Muslims."

"There is nothing surprising in a Muslim or a Pathan like me subscribing to a creed of non-violence. It is not a new creed. It was followed fourteen hundred years ago by the Prophet all the time he was in Mecca, and it has since been followed by all those who wanted to throw off an oppressor's yoke." —*Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan*

This "perfect storm" of conditions seemed to come to a head following 2001. The Pakistani government adopted a policy of tactical collaboration with the US on the NATO occupation of Afghanistan and on the "global war on terror." Nonetheless, in elections closely controlled by that government, the Northwest Frontier Province elected a coalition of Islamist parties to the provincial government. Most of these parties had sympathetic, even cooperative relationships with many leaders and activists in the autonomous tribal areas, who in turn had cooperative and sympathetic relationships with the Taliban, Al Qaeda, and other foreign *jihadi* units.⁵

Yet, after serving almost a full term in office, in 2008, the coalition of Islamist parties was replaced in provincial elections by a coalition led by the Awami National Party (ANP), an avowedly secular political party. The ANP is no flash in the pan. It is in fact the latest incarnation of the oldest political party in the Northwest Frontier Province, and was the major political force in the province until the very eve of the partition of India and Pakistan. Indeed, it opposed the creation of the separate Muslim nation of Pakistan on the grounds of commitment to social reform and secularism.

Nothing better conveys the complexity of the relationship between Islamic ideology and political militancy than the ANP. Notwithstanding its commitment to a secular political order, the ANP stands for the traditions of the deeply traditional and devout Pathan/Pushtoon society, and is committed to dialogue with many of those in rebellion against or disaffected with Pakistan's army and federal government. The historical antecedents of the ANP, both cultural and political, shed light on the complex nature of militancy, mobili-

⁵ That the parties also were part of a political coalition with the military government allied with the US and NATO is an added irony.

zation, resistance, and anti-Western sentiment in this volatile region. They also offer a complex, ambiguous, and surprising understanding of the doctrine of *jihad*.

The ANP is the successor and proud guardian of the legacy of the colonial-era Khudai Khidmatgar, the “Army of God.” This was an early 20th century mass movement of anti-British resistance, led by the charismatic and deeply devout Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, a Pathan notable from a landowning family.

The movement seemed at first blush to reflect the image of the Pathan as a proud and warlike people, resistant to foreign occupation and influence, and deeply motivated by religious faith and identity. It was on those grounds that the British sought to demonize it and to justify their harsh measures against its followers and leaders. Khudai Khidmatgar soldiers wore military uniforms and drilled like an army. Using rhetoric replete with references to *jihad* and martyrdom, the movement sought expulsion of the British, as had previous religious movements, including the insurrection led by the so-called “mad *mullah*,” Mullah Mastun.

However, while it reflected its historical antecedents and cultural milieu in mixing the practice of spirituality, martial language, and militant resistance, the Khudai Khidmatgar offered one startling innovation. As a matter of religious conviction and ethical choice, it was an army with no weapons. While not ready to offer violence, it did not shrink from death, martyrdom, and resistance by all unarmed means. Its brand of militancy remains legendary, and its soldiers’ commitment to martyrdom was deadly serious: many risked and some suffered death, wounds, and imprisonment while resisting armed colonial constabulary.

In urging villagers to resist a ban on freedom of association, Khan used the metaphor of war. “Pay no attention to the order,” he exhorted. “Be ready and come out to the non-violent battlefield. Non-violent war means a kind of war your ancestors fought fourteen hundred years ago. Show the people you are their descendants... Rule yourselves, and as long as you live, do not submit to the rule of anybody else. Be prepared and free yourselves from this oppressive rule. If you perish on the battlefield, what does it matter? Everyone must die.”⁶

The last pair of slogans would have had tremendous echoes for his listeners in their lessons on the Quran and on the accounts of the words of the Prophet before battles with the enemies of the first Muslim community. Elsewhere Khan described the evolution of his understanding of the political duties of a Muslim:

⁶ Eknath Easwaran, *Badshah Khan, Non-violent Soldier of Islam* (Tomales, CA: Nilgiri Press, 1984).

As a young boy, I had violent tendencies; the hot blood of the Pathans was in my veins. But in jail I had nothing to do but read the Quran. I read about the Prophet Mohammed in Mecca, about his patience, his suffering, his dedication. I had read it all before, as a child, but now I read it in the light of what I was hearing all around me about Gandhiji's struggle against the British Raj.

Khan articulated the theological basis of this posture as follows.

There is nothing surprising in a Muslim or a Pathan like me subscribing to a creed of nonviolence. It is not a new creed. It was followed fourteen hundred years ago by the Prophet all the time he was in Mecca, and it has since been followed by all those who wanted to throw off an oppressor's yoke.

Khan's reference to the Quran and to the Prophet's forbearance and pacifism has two dimensions. It is at once an ethical appeal to nonviolent principle and a reference to the pragmatic superiority of nonviolence in the face of more powerful opponents. The Khudai Khidmatgar drew inspiration equally from the Prophet who could cannily wrong-foot his opponents by accepting partial victories and disadvantageous terms in the short run (the treaty of Hudaibiyah) and the Prophet who refused to bend to his enemies.

Historians have noted the extent to which both the teaching of the Quran and the leadership of the Prophet sought to blunt the effects of the traditional code of *jahiliyyah* in Arabia. That code required a haughty dignity among elites (and therefore a sense of social stratification in society), a sense of exclusive tribal identities, and violence and revenge for the vindication of the dignity of leaders and the maintenance of balance in tribal interests. The Prophet often struggled against the manifestation of *jahiliyyah*, both outside and residually within the early Muslim community. The Frontier of Khan's time manifested a similar dialectic: the tribal institution of blood feud, called *badal*, coexisted with more inclusive and less violent norms based on Islam. The notion that the embracing of nonviolence would constitute the victory of true Islam over backward, violent, and arrogant pre-Islamic cultural norms enjoyed the finest Islamic pedigree.

It is highly significant that the Khudai Khidmatgar's ideology, at once religious, militant, and pacifist, is the foundational ideology of the dominant political force in the Northwest Frontier Province today. The more so because the same movement at one time articulated the case for Pashtunistan—unity of the Pashtuns of Pakistan and Afghanistan, which is also not an insignificant dimension of the current security challenges there. This is not to deny that many Taliban sympathizers in the province remain committed to a more conventionally threatening version of *jihad*, and would find reprehensible the ANP and its ideological antecedents, even as they share the vision of a Pashtun unity spanning the border. We need only acknowledge that the alternative ideological tradition—more pacific and yet no less militant or anti-Western—also holds its own in the rough and tumble of Frontier politics.

Having survived for decades, this alternative vision has demonstrated that even in the stark world of the Frontier, Islam and its adherents support several credible versions of *jihad*.

Jihad in the Way of Allah

A fair assessment based on observation of Muslim societies and history would have to conclude that *jihad* does mean more than violence, that it encompasses spiritual and ethical striving and struggle. Certainly, contemporary publications abound throughout the Muslim world that use the term *mujahid* to describe those who simply seek intellectual and social renewal of Muslim communities.⁷ The discussion that follows focuses on *jihad* as struggle in the external worldly context, whether as a doctrine of mobilization, militancy, or armed struggle, and whether for purposes of social justice or religious rectitude. There is a dynamic, complex, and ambiguous interplay among the mystical, political, military, and legal or theological views of *jihad*.⁸

Muslims use textual and contextual approaches to the Quran to caution Western discourse against facile association of faith and violence. Modern Islamic scholars, such as the Pakistani Fazlur Rahman, have noted that the Quran must be read in context, and that Muslim champions and their critics are equally guilty of an inert, literal, and merely textual reading.

Scholars—Western and Muslim, Islamic and secular—have noted that the social context of the Arabian peninsula at the time of the Prophet was marked by the violent code of *jahiliyyah*, and that the Prophet’s championing of an alternative vision of social relations and sanctions was an implicit rejection of violence as the principal currency of social and political relationships. When the Prophet used violence, he did so for defense of the Muslim community against persecution and unprovoked violence. This was in pursuit of a social revolution, and in the context of economic and political vested interests trying to wipe out Islam with violence. Even before the onset of his Prophetic mission, the Prophet was a nonviolent partisan of worldly justice, having formed an organization (*hifl al-fudl*) to help victims of injustice in Mecca. Thus, the legitimacy of the use of violence is dependent on political context and struggle.⁹

⁷ This has parallels in evangelical Christian metaphors of military struggle. One example is the Salvation Army. Literary examples include the poet and mystic William Blake’s “I shall not cease from Mental Fight/ Nor shall my Sword sleep in my hand;/Till we have built Jerusalem” or the Anglican hymn “Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war/With the cross of Jesus going on before.”

⁸ This is hardly unique to Islam. One of the two favorite books of Gandhi, the iconic apostle of nonviolence, was the Hindu scripture *Bhagavad Gita*. Not only is this an account of a battle; it is an explicit encouragement by God incarnate to overcome humane scruples, battle one’s enemies, and slay them. Gandhi read the exhortation as a metaphor for the spiritual war over ignorance, selfishness, and limited awareness.

⁹ The range of opinion on the American Revolution and the various anticolonial armed rebellions, as well as wars and other armed struggles against dictatorship in the course of the 20th century, suggests that an objective view would find this Islamic view of violence squarely in the mainstream of global thought.

One finds as much clear-eyed realism among Muslims as among thinkers in other traditions that not all violence perpetrated by Muslims, historically or today, is legitimate. Even where states and elites have sought to mobilize warriors to arms on the appeal of *jihad*, Muslim political violence in modern history is understood as being like that of the West or other societies: conducted for worldly objectives regardless of the ideological rationalization.

Many Muslim intellectuals and Islamic scholars note that the term *jihad* occurs on 41 occasions in the Quran, and never to mean war. Other terms are used for war, such as *qital* or *harb*. Prohibitions against warring are found on more than 70 occasions in the Quran.

The overall spirit and vision of the Quran provides guidance for unpacking the political import of *jihad*: whether it means warfare, political violence, militant nonviolent resistance, or simply striving for social justice through established institutions. The concepts that recur throughout, often as the attributes of Allah, are justice (*adl*, *qist*, and *hakama*), benevolence (*ihsan*), compassion (*rahmah*), and wisdom (*hikmah*). Even were *jihad* a source of violence, its use in the Quran on a mere 41 occasions may be compared to 194 instances of *ihsan* (benevolence), 101 of *hikmah* (wisdom), and 244 of the various terms for justice. The terms *rahman* and *rahim* (compassion and mercy) between them recur 335 times in the Quran. These are the attributes invoked in prayer every time a devout Muslim begins any work.

Even if *jihad* does provide doctrinal justification for the use of violence, the Quran's approach is consistent with mainstream thought in the West, including "just war" theories.¹⁰ "War in the way of Allah" is what is called for, and this is by definition not for personal ambition, revenge, or territorial aggrandizement. It is for defense, not aggression. Thinkers look at the context of the Prophet's own life and work in building the early Muslim community, and in navigating the practical demands of survival while hewing to an ethical vision.

Some Difficulties

It bears repetition that there is no charge of violence, superiority, exclusiveness, or self-righteousness that may be laid against Islamic tradition or thought that may not also be laid against most other major religions. Nonetheless, there is a danger of a one-sided, too-rosy reading of the political import of Islamic precept. This is an understandable impulse among Muslims and their Western defenders seeking to protect against unfair calumny. It is also understandable among Muslim liberals seeking to promote a more pacific vision of

¹⁰ In this respect also, Islam is not unique. The foundational scriptures of many major religions, such as the Old Testament, or the Hindu Mahabharata and Ramayana, either take armed combat for granted as part of the working out of divine purpose on earth, or even glorify violence and warfare in pursuit of righteousness.

Muslim duty. However, a tendentiously simplistic reading of *jihad* specifically or violence more generally may undercut the credibility of the defense. It may also impede clear understanding and honest appraisal of the difficulties presented and the ideological and political work to be done.

The distinction between the “greater” *jihad* of spiritual and ethical striving and the “lesser” of armed struggle is important to Islam’s defenders. However, this is of limited authority within Islamic tradition, at least among strict schools, in that it is a “popular tradition,” not strictly speaking *hadith*. Moreover, although *jihad* means “struggle, endeavor, striving, or fight,” and not “war” as such, most commentary treats armed struggle as at least one of its important dimensions. The fact that most writers note that *jihad* in the path of Allah is the only form of warfare permitted suggests that divinely sanctioned violence is indeed legitimate.

Many Muslims today feel beleaguered in their own societies by the forces of global capitalism, by Western culture, and by local autocracies supported by Western powers. Even those in democratic Muslim societies find in secularism or in economic inequality an existential threat to all that is familiar and all that is validated as righteous by religious education and socialization. Such a sense of existential threat to the *ummah* and to an authentically Islamic way of life is a ready candidate for *jihad* in the more worldly sense, including that of violence. All this is so regardless of radical ideologies, fundamentalist propaganda, or puritan revivalism, though their introduction certainly sharpens the sense of antagonism and feeds on the broader sense of social and cultural grievance.

Even where very few are ready to actually engage in *jihad* themselves, the willingness of many to accept the legitimacy of the actions of the few will be greater under such circumstances. Because there is also a substantial and respectable intellectual tradition that speaks to the duty of Muslims to come to the rescue of Muslims oppressed in other societies, the conduct of what we might call “solidarity *jihad*” will also be more acceptable.

Two intellectual approaches are deployed in an attempt to domesticate the destabilizing and subversive potential of this. One, found among progressive and liberal Indian Islamic scholars such as Asghar Ali Engineer, questions the authority of canonical doctrine on the grounds that it merely reflects accidental reasons of state, not divine guidance. The other,

“Slay the polytheists wherever you find them. But if they repent, and perform the prayer, and pay the alms, then let them go their way; Allah is all forgiving, all compassionate.” —*Quran* 9:5

“They long that you should disbelieve so that you might be on the same level; so take not from among them friends until they flee their homes in Allah’s way. Then if they turn back to hostility, seize them and kill them wherever you find them, and take no friend or helper from among them.” —*Quran* 4:89

typified in the position of the Saudi government, takes the opposite approach, seeking in state or social sanction the exclusive justification for the deployment of violence. The former is the approach of theological and political liberals seeking the freedom to interpret *jihad* for contemporary requirements, whereas the latter is the approach of conservatives.

It can hardly be refuted that the doctrinal guidance about *jihad* propounded in the early years of Islam reflects the practical exigencies or logistical imperatives of an expanding (or beleaguered) Muslim community. Some Muslim thinkers and Islamic scholars note that there is therefore a real danger of confusing Allah's will with such practical requirements.

Others reject this implication. They note that the integration of the sacred and the profane is a defining characteristic of Islamic thought. The spiritual duty to Allah and the requirements of the welfare of the community are both of equal importance in the Quran. The Prophet himself is seen as the cleric-warrior-statesman par excellence, centrally concerned with issues of political leadership of the community and diplomacy on its behalf with outsiders. Thus, while every act of subsequent interpretation by Muslim political leaders, exegetes, legists, theologians, and historians runs the risk of distorting the meaning of *jihad* in the Quran, in an important sense the full range and implications of its meanings can only be gleaned from the entire historical experience of building a community of Islamic faith.

The attempt to render *jihad* less threatening, by suggesting that it is not a license for anarchic violence at the disposal of any zealot with a conviction that he has special knowledge of Allah's will, raises its own difficulties. According to this approach, *jihad* is constrained by requiring the authority of a state or legitimate ruler, or of the *ummah*. It argues that, according to the Quran, it is Allah alone who punishes oppressors and that no individual is empowered to do so, only a state or a community.

The force of this argument is vitiated by two considerations. One is the high degree of skepticism about the religious authority of the state characteristic of Islam. This is illustrated in the relatively decentralized nature of theological or ideological authority, and the rejection of state-imposed religious orthodoxy. The notion that the state can effectively and legitimately domesticate a fundamentally subversive concept such as *jihad* is a dubious one.

The other difficulty with domesticating *jihad* by requiring official sanction is that it robs Muslims of a tool of mobilization for struggles for social justice and for resistance to official justice, surely at the heart of the ethical vision of Islam. To preserve this tool of insurgent politics is to entertain the prospect of incendiary means. An idea cannot simultaneously be liberating and neatly contained. Its dangerous implications are the price paid for its creative potential.

The complex intertwining of worldly progress and the religious embrace of violence is starkly embodied in two examples from South Asia.

The Indian educational institution and school of thought, Dar ul Deoband, is highly influential throughout South Asia. It is a dynamic ideological and educational movement. In Deoband, Puritanism and theological extremism coexist with political liberalism and progressive ideology. Deoband recently convened a conference that condemned terrorism as a violation of Islamic teaching, but its curriculum includes passages such as: “The destruction of the sword is incurred by infidels, although they may not be the first aggressors, as appears from various passages in the sacred writings which are generally received to this effect.” In its statement condemning terrorism, Dar ul Deoband also emphatically condemns injustices perpetrated by the West.

In the early 20th century, the Indian poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal, a knight of the British Empire, prominent Muslim modernist and reformer, and author of *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, is another case in point. On the one hand his work gives *jihad* an entirely political character as a tool of anticolonial mobilization. On the other, his poetry echoes martyrdom as he laments the death of youth’s “delight in death.”

These are difficulties only if there is a perceived compulsion to propagate a pacific vision of Islam. We have seen that there is in all the major religious traditions a mainstream discourse that is not shy about the use of violence under defined circumstances. The question for Islam turns out to be the same as for any other tradition: the circumstances in which violence may legitimately be used, not an abstract question of whether in all cases it is legitimate or is a religious duty. Of course, if moral, political, or ideological legitimacy is narrowly defined, as there is a danger it might be within Islam, then the reach of purportedly permissible violence will be greater.

While the West (and the non-Muslim world) may therefore have justifiable concerns about that last question, it is important that it not hold Islam to a higher standard of political non-violence than it is willing to embrace for itself.

The Embodiment of Justice

Islam, State, and Society

The relationship between religion and the state in Islam is not settled. The most commonly expressed view is that in Islam, religion and politics are inseparable. This is usually taken to mean that Islamic precept must inform the design of state institutions, and that the state is a proper instrument of religious purposes. A minority view contends that such guidance as is available from the time of the Prophet is on the proper relationship between religion

Contemporary Global Challenges: Muslim History and Islamic Guidance

Islam's vision has from the outset been a universal one. It has always aspired to create a transnational community, and its political history has allowed it the scope to embody this transnational vision. Intellectuals and historians, Muslim and non-Muslim, also note that the orientation and evolution of the early Muslim community under the Prophet's guidance was at once both spiritual and pragmatic, with public utility as an overarching principle. This provides a point of departure for contemporary discussion in the Muslim world about the extent to which Islamic principles provide direction for addressing contemporary global challenges such as environmental degradation, migration, narcotics and crime, or disease outbreaks.

Some Muslims suggest that the instrumental and invasive frame of mind that has produced environmental degradation and its secondary consequences reflects Western ethics and social philosophy. This point of view finds Islam a particularly useful antidote, pointing to principles of natural stewardship found in the Quran and other Islamic sources.

Other Muslims note that migration is intrinsic to early Muslim history, beginning with the flight to Abyssinia and to Madina, as well as early instances of the spread of Islam through trade and peaceful settlement. It is suggested that the scriptural and other early sources of ideological guidance, and Islam's intrinsically inclusive, global, and fluid sense of identity, may also offer ideological guidance and render Muslim sensibility and tradition more responsive to contemporary challenges.

Muslim economists have articulated Islamic principles for their discipline. One Islamic approach to poverty and economic development suggests thinking of society as a unified—not an atomized—entity; adopting an adaptive approach to policy formulation; recognizing the rapidly changing technological and knowledge environment; preserving the principles of individual freedom and dignity and rejection of coercion; and recognizing that all assets, whether owned/managed by private or public entities, have a social aspect.

A more skeptical Muslim view suggests that specific Islamic guidance on modern challenges is limited because the currently dominant theology was elaborated to answer a very different set of questions in the Middle Ages. However, the application of fundamental Islamic principles in the spirit of the Quranic injunction to observe and acquire knowledge, and the principle of *Ijtehad*, could yield a dynamic tradition, though such thinking is in its early stages and there remains a need for an issue-based and more specific approach.

Some have suggested that the Organization of the Islamic Conference constitute working groups on the principal global natural, economic, developmental, and governance challenges of the day.

Even where the Quran or other religious sources offer useful guidance about matters such as crops, animals, and water; the treatment of migrants; economic justice; or the probity of governments; it is commonly agreed that the behavior of Muslims falls short of these precepts. Many Muslims look to religion to play a critical role in educating citizens on basic issues and civic duties, and as a source of legitimacy it can act as a tool for civil society to hold elites and political leaders accountable.

Islam and Environmental Protection

Jumaina Siddiqui

The United Arab Emirates is constructing Masdar City, designed to be zero waste and carbon neutral, but the majority of countries in the Muslim world are not taking innovative steps to address environmental degradation. Many lack the financial resources and political will to do so even if it was on their agenda. However, even the wealthier countries of the Muslim world, such as those in the Gulf Cooperation Council, have spent little on research and development of green technologies. In agreement with other developing nations, Muslim governments make the case that since wealthy, developed countries have had the largest impact on the Earth's environment, they should be the ones investing in solutions.

Since Islamic principles play a role in the governance of many countries of the Muslim world, an emerging body of scholarly literature that highlights Qur'anic guidance on the duties of Muslims to protect the Earth from environmental degradation could motivate governments to address these issues. For example, in Islam humans are seen as trustees of the Earth and are responsible to sustain and protect it. Surah 6:165 of the Qur'an states that "It is He Who hath made you (His) agents, inheritors of the earth." Additionally, Surah 2:11 states "Do not cause corruption on the earth." Furthermore, Surah 2:60 states that man should "...eat and drink the sustenance God has provided and do not act wrongfully in the land, causing corruption." One Islamic scholar notes that by protecting the Earth a Muslim is serving God because "to Allah belong all things in the heavens and on earth: And He it is that Encompasseth all things" in Surah 4:26. He also notes that Surah 15:19–22, calls upon mankind to maintain balance and moderation when utilizing Earth's resources:

And the earth We have spread out (like a carpet); set thereon mountains firm and immovable; and produced therein all kinds of things in due balance. And We have provided therein means of subsistence, for

and society, not religion and the state. This in turn suggests that principles for the conduct of the state were elaborated by subsequent rulers for practical reasons of state, indistinguishable from reasons of state found in the non-Muslim world. These principles therefore do not reflect strictly to religious values, but rather the political values of the early Muslim societies.

According to this view, Madina in the time of the Prophet constitutes the model of Islamic governance. Since Madina had no paid police or army, and no other indicia of a modern state, the role of Islamic ethics was to guide and imbue social behavior, not to inform the shape of formal state government. The authoritative model of Islamic precepts of governance was thus elaborated in a setting where Muslims coexisted with non-Muslim communities, did not enjoy undisputed political authority, and yet had preeminent moral authority through the role played by the Prophet: in other words, a civic model of Islam.

you and for those for whose sustenance ye are not responsible. And there is not a thing but its (sources and) treasures (inexhaustible) are with Us; but We only send down thereof in due and ascertainable measures. And We send the fecundating winds, then cause the rain to descend from the sky, therewith providing you with water (in abundance), though ye are not the guardians of its stores.

Surah 23:18 addresses issues of water scarcity and calls for conservation: “We sent water down from the sky in due measure and lodged in the earth—We have the power to take it all away if We so wish.”

Despite Muslim scholars appealing to these and other verses from the Qur’an on environmental protection and climate change, there is a lack of broad public awareness of the issues among Muslims on the national and international level. However, there are several positive trends. The platform for Indonesia’s Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa or National Awakening Party has a strong environmental message and considers itself the country’s “Green Party.” In 2005, Muslim organizations in East Africa established the Africa Muslim Environment Network. The Islamic Foundation for Ecology and Environmental Sciences raises awareness of the environmental issues through projects around the world and publications like the *Muslim Green Guide*.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), representing one-fifth of the world’s population, could serve as a forum for Muslim countries to address global climate change and develop a strategy for the Muslim world. However, they cannot wait too long to address environmental degradation because many of these countries are already feeling its effects. Between 2002 and 2007, members of the OIC have endured 32 floods, 11 flash floods, 6 typhoons, 5 cold waves, 4 droughts, 3 tornadoes, and 3 snow avalanches.

These proponents of Islam as a predominantly social ethical system note that the role of the Prophet in Madina was not that of king or chief of the territory or group, but as *hakam* (arbiter) of all the people. They argue that most Muslims to this day have no ecclesiastical hierarchies, resist state imposition of religious interpretation or orthodoxy, and disdain official Islamic bodies such as *Ulama* councils.

Those who believe that Islamic precepts about society are more properly the domain of social ethics than political theory are not necessarily quietists or apolitical. They are often as active politically on the basis of explicitly Islamic conviction or Muslim identity. The point of difference is that their religious values inform their political behavior as citizens regardless of the religious, secular, or neutral character of the constitutional order. Their commitment to *shariah* focuses on its embodiment less in state institutions and more in social practice.

At its most general, “Islamic” refers to Islam as a source of legitimacy for a variety of positions, including apolitical quietism, emphasis on personal ethics, or mystical spirituality. Islamist politics refers to a point of view that believes that Islamic values should be embodied in the design of state institutions and laws. Islamic politics describes something distinct and broader. The infusion of politics with Islamic terminology and ethos is broader than, and distinguishable from, the phenomenon of “Islamist” political parties and movements (or ruling elites), that are explicitly devoted to the establishment or

Shariah

“The Book gives us all that Allah permits us, or is essential for us, to know about his attributes. But it does not require our acceptance of its contents simply on the ground of its own statement of them. On the contrary, it offers arguments and evidence...It spoke to the rational mind and alerted the intelligence.”
—Muhammad Abduh

“The [Quran] is a powerful sacred text, but we must recognize that our understanding of it is both historically conditioned and shaped by human agency.” —Abdullahi Ahmed An-Naim

Sharia comprises “Law” as it is understood in the Old Testament (the Divine Commandment as well as rules of social practice), *Dharma* in Hindu thought (individual social duty as well as the collective rules for the ordering of communities and the relationships among them), Canon Law (rules for the ordering of religious life), and elements now commonly embodied in secular law, including crimes and contracts.

Among Western observers, *shariah* seems to occasion anxiety, fear, distrust, or even anger. It is often taken to imply establishment of theocratic forms of government. The frequent Muslim reference to the inseparability of politics and religion in the Islamic sensibility bolsters such concern.

Like *jihad*, *shariah* is capable of various equally authoritative interpretations by Islamic scholars and worldly Muslim thinkers and intellectuals. Also like *jihad*, *shariah* is susceptible to multifaceted use: for radical criticism of the established social order, or as apologetics for autocratic and illiberal legal and political systems. In brief, it is a hotly contested intellectual territory between those who would contain and those who would empower. Finally like *jihad*, the various facets of *shariah* include guidance about personal, spiritual, and moral development as a Muslim as well as ordering social relationships. A few Muslims consider all but the Quran to be of uncertain value as authority.

One finds a supple and flexible theological discourse, susceptible to conservative and radical, and puritan and liberal ones. It is noted by Muslim intellectuals that the Prophet’s companions themselves had varying understandings of some verses of the Quran, and there is clear evidence that the Prophet, knowing this, did not seek to impose a unitary vision. Apart from a universal acceptance of the Quran, and an almost universal acceptance of the *Sunnah* (actions and behavior of the Prophet), different groups of Muslims follow different schools of *shariah* based on different authorities. A variety of exegetical tools may be used, including agreement or consensus of expert opinions (*ijma*), analogy (*qiyas*), and reasoning based on the public good (*istislah*), as well as *ijtihad* (commonly understood as “critical reasoning,” more narrowly the use of all capacities to reach a legal conclusion).

maintenance of a state that follows specific Islamic teachings. For all these points of view, Islam functions as the presumptive source of legitimacy and of both moral and intellectual authority. It is less a description of a particular political program and more a normative source of legitimacy.

Divisive debates have sometimes arisen within the realm of Islamic politics. When religious rhetoric and objectives are employed by political actors, the religiously devout sometimes

Controversy abounds over the attempt to accommodate *shariah*, understood as sacred law, to the formal legal systems of states. A totalistic view holds that *shariah* must be adopted wholesale, effectively rendering religious scholars the sole jurists in society. There is contestation over the significance of *shariah* for contemporary Muslim societies. For example, does the obligatory sovereignty of Allah allow constitutions of states to embody popular sovereignty? Is this sovereignty delegated by Allah, or a lesser form of sovereignty over a more limited realm, with the state occupying less space than society? In some instances heated debate takes place between what independent religious scholars demand and what official and domesticated institutions such as ulema councils propound.

In some Muslim societies, what is understood as “*shariah*” in fact reflects actual practice, and therefore includes traditional and customary norms and practices derived from local pre-Islamic cultures, or shared with non-Muslim communities. For example, in popular discourse in Afghanistan, the term is frequently used simply to describe all normative law, Islamic or customary, as well as all legal institutions, formal ones of the state as well as traditional dispute resolution ones such as *shura* and *jirga*.

The doctrinal and intellectual suppleness of the idea of *shariah*, no less than that of “justice” in the West, suggests that the juridical is but one dimension; that there is a broader philosophical and ethical dimension to be considered. *Shariah* thus provides simultaneous guidance for the requirements of an Islamic State, an Islamic Society, as well as for the Truly Muslim Person.

The complexity is conveyed in the often-expressed idea among Muslim progressives that Islamic penal justice can legitimately only be administered in a just society, which embodies Islamic economic justice. It is also conveyed by consideration of the effort among progressive Muslims to move beyond the formalist view of *shariah* as inert and static rules toward one that looks at the duty to embody its animating values. This progressive tradition (typified in the work of the Malaysian Chandra Muzaffar) began in recent decades with calling upon *shariah* as authority for struggles against poverty, corruption, and denial of human rights. It has now begun to look at other contemporary challenges such as environmental degradation and terrorism to seek frameworks that simultaneously answer to Islamic authority and to emerging contemporary global norms and challenges. The dissident Iranian thinker Abdolkarim Soroush, author of *Reason, Freedom and Democracy in Islam*, looks to democracy as the best safeguard against human error in the interpretation of the exact requirements of *shariah*.

see religion politicized and abused as a tool of mobilization by movements that are principally political. They fear religion's subordination to narrow and short-term political interests. This is particularly so when autocracies such as the Saudi monarchy or the later stages of the Saddam Hussein dictatorship are seen as exploiting religious loyalties for the perpetration of worldly elite interests. When Islamist movements have emphasized short-term political objectives, they have supported coups and other undemocratic means for rising to power or influence, as in Sudan, or have agreed to be junior partners to military dictatorships, as in Pakistan. More democratically inclined Islamists see in these a detriment to the integrity of Islamic values and Muslim society.

Islamists and Islamism

Although there is a rich body of Western literature devoted to a nuanced and differentiated analysis of Islamist political movements, Western policymakers and publics by and large still speak of Islamist movements in general terms, as if they reflect a uniform model.

The variations among Islamist movements and political parties reflect their specific national histories and political conditions. The most important distinction to be drawn is that between movements that are principally political in their thrust and those whose principal concern is the restoration of an ideal Islamic culture and society. The principal thrust of movements in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Palestine, and Turkey is predominantly political and only secondarily religious. The popular appeal within Muslim nations of such movements is based in substantial part on their articulation of aspirations for social and economic justice or antipathy to elements of the global economic order, which are shared with secular movements worldwide, albeit articulated within the framework of Islamic justice and statecraft.

Islamists have been successful both in repressive systems, such as Egypt, and in democratic systems, such as Lebanon, Malaysia, Palestine, and Turkey. In other relatively open political systems, such as Pakistan, they have done less well. In Turkey, they have succeeded in democratic processes under peaceful conditions. In other democratic processes the pressure of conflict, military occupation, and ethnic antagonism has been a good part of their appeal, as in Palestine or Lebanon. In yet other cases, their role as challengers to a repressive state has burnished their appeal, as in Egypt.

The conditions under which they have operated have determined the ideologies and strategies that distinguish them from each other. Mainstream Islamism in Turkey is fully invested in democracy. Indeed, it is democracy's stalwart champion against the elitism of other mainstream parties. In Indonesia, the older Islamist political movements, Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama, formerly accommodated themselves to an elitist and anti-democratic secular order. They thus carved out a niche in social and educational service

and civic initiative, which proved the basis of their long-term institutional viability. These constraints formed several of their current characteristics. They were compelled thereby to coexist with the broad range of Indonesian political opinion, including the substantial body of secular opinion. These formative conditions also served to bolster their conservative instincts, and moderate the temptation to adopt an oppositional stance, even when the political order opened up. The more corrupt and autocratic systems in the Muslim world have meanwhile spawned the most radical Islamist groups, which have enjoyed varying degrees of support or success.

The examples of Hamas in Palestine and Hezbollah in Lebanon demonstrate a curious segmentation within movements that operate as sophisticated political actors and maintain military capacities. Some have suggested that Western policy should tolerate such segmentation, with the understanding that military capacity related to the conflict with Israel should not blind us to the political importance of these movements to future political stability within their societies. The reality is more troublesome, as is suggested by the deployment of Hezbollah's military capacity within Lebanese politics. However, in either case the capacity to diminish the importance of the military element to the benefit of the political depends on acceptance and engagement of the complexity of these movements, not their demonization and their exclusion from diplomacy and politics.

The majority of Islamist political parties are pluralistic to the extent that they accept that all citizens, Muslim and non-Muslim, are capable of being responsible participants in an Islamic polity. Their intention is not to purportedly "re-Islamicize" Muslims or "Islamicize" non-Muslims, but to reorganize society on the basis of ideals and values acknowledged already to be held by the majority. They confront their states, not their societies. They are also ideologically pragmatic. The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt looked to Sufi principles, while the closely related Muslim Brotherhood in Sudan did not hesitate to look to the Sudanese Communist Party as a source of ideological guidance and understanding. *Jihadis*, in contrast, see themselves as involved in confrontation with their societies as well as their states, and reject established value systems and ideologies indigenous to their societies, both traditional and modernist.

Because of their appeal to popular opinion and because they have suffered at the hands of autocratic political systems, political Islamists have at various times championed principles such as a free press, an independent judiciary, and representative government. On the other hand, they are committed to the imperative to base all political actions on divinely guided principles, and the notion that all political and social arrangements must correspond to a unitary vision of the relationship between the worldly and the divine.

This dominant trend among Islamist movements, the predominantly political, may be distinguished from what are often called "*jihadi*" (though the discussion of *jihad* above

Human Rights and Tolerance

One of the more controversial features of the Western-Muslim dialogue is the question of human rights. The controversy is not about whether some governments of Muslim states violate basic rights. About this there is wide agreement. However, questions of pluralism—issues such as tolerance of varieties of Muslim opinion, of non-Muslim religions, of irreligion, and attitudes to apostasy—are hotly contested within the Muslim world and between the Muslim world and Western opinion. Controversy also arises from Muslim resentment at the Western perception that there is something intrinsic to Muslim society or Islamic thought that provides a larger enabling environment of human rights violations.

Among the dimensions that many Muslim intellectuals seek to bring into this particular discussion is the extent to which Western societies themselves act against Islam, through a secularism perceived as aggressive and intolerant, and through the resurgence of Christian or Judeo-Christian discourse in Western public life. There is also substantial discussion of discrimination and persecution against Muslim citizens and communities in societies such as India or Western Europe, but not against Islam as a religion.

Some see ideological variety within Muslim societies as a sign of vigor; others see particular sectarian minorities such as Ismailis or Ahmadis in terms such as “Western-inspired mischief to be nipped in the bud.” The latter point of view seems to some to be based on political, not religious, concerns; that is to say, that the concern is about a threat to political stability and order rather than a concern with ideological rectitude.

Questions of pluralism, particularly the treatment of apostasy, remain difficult. There is on the one hand a sense that pluralism is not a threat, and that Islamic thought thrives in an open intellectual environment. On the other hand, there is a repeated discussion about the point at which intellectual freedom becomes a challenge to the Islamic nature of the society—a challenge that is considered beyond the pale and therefore legitimately sanctionable.

In one point of view, the tradition of Islamic statecraft and social norms going back to the time of the Prophet in Madina offers progressive and liberal models of justice and welfare, the rights of minorities, unity within the Muslim community, and cohesion with non-Muslim minorities and neighbors. This perspective is encapsulated in the observation that the term *ummah* was used by the Prophet not to describe the Muslim community but as a collective noun applied to all the communities of Madina, including Jews, Christians, and pagans as well as Muslims.

Muslim critics of intolerance in their own societies, as well as those who deny its existence or defend it, draw attention to the intellectually, socially, and politically warm and generous attitude toward Christian and Jews found in the Quran and in the early life of the Muslim community. Others

suggests that any such label is problematic). Whereas Islamist political movements are focused on their own societies and on addressing the specific problems of those, “*jihadis*” by contrast are focused on a more revolutionary agenda in relationship to their own societies and on a global agenda of ideological and strategic confrontation with the West.

note instances in Muslim history from Spain to Mughal India that prove that intellectual liberality is at least consistent with, if not intrinsic to, the tenor of Islamic thought. Variances reflect social and economic conditions and circumstances, much as in any civilization or religious tradition—maritime and trading cultures tend to be more liberal and cosmopolitan, whereas less dynamic Muslim societies evince a greater conservatism and less ideological flexibility.

On the other hand, illiberality is found in extreme and minority positions such as theological justification for the killing of apostates, extension of this even to disapproved sects within Islam condemned as “non-Muslim,” and the justification of severe sanctions against *fitnah* (mischief that can cause disunity), even when the mischief is an ideological slight rather than actions against political stability and order.

Illiberality is also embodied in mainstream discussions of the bearing of Islamic thought on human rights, as reflected in the Organization of the Islamic Conference’s Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, adopted in 1990. This document reflects a troubled meeting of universal secular legal and ethical norms and the universalistic and liberationist ethical vision of Islam. The Cairo Declaration is surely unique among international human rights charters adopted by states in its supremacism and theocratic orientation. The sole criterion and authority throughout the Cairo Declaration is explicitly *shariah*, not the rights of individuals or the powers of states.

The declaration’s provisions on the rights of women reiterate Islamic principles of inheritance and financial capacity. While Islam was, in this respect, once the most progressive in the world, universal principles have now caught up and also embody these values. Beyond this, the rights of women provided in the Cairo Declaration relate to the right to be supported by a husband. There is no consideration of the rights of women outside marriage or the related issue of women’s right to livelihoods.

The declaration’s provision on labor rights, while embodying a paternalistic protection for workers as individuals, is silent on issues of labor association such as unions.

The declaration’s prohibition of compulsion in religion relates only to its use to convert people from Islam. Free expression is protected only to the extent that it is not contrary to *shariah* principles or is otherwise according to the norms of *shariah*. The provisions on information are framed not in terms of freedom of information but rather a limitation on the use of information, to prohibit its use to violate the sanctities and dignity of the Prophets, or to undermine moral and ethical values or to harm society or weaken its faith. Political participation and holding of office is made subject to provisions of *shariah*, Crime and punishment must be only as provided for in *shariah*. While this can be seen as a protective principle limiting state authority, it could also be seen as limiting the reach of more universal and liberating international human rights principles and norms.

There is a real danger that inordinate emphasis on the cultural dimensions of Islamism, (such as the anti-Americanism of most, or the relative conservatism of some on issues of women’s rights), will contribute to alienation, polarization, and radicalization. Repression of Islamists has already resulted from convergence of the culturally based anxieties

of Western governments and the political interests of their allied autocracies in the Muslim world. Repression has undercut those Islamists who chose to participate in the give and take of politics, and has strengthened and emboldened groups committed to revolutionary action outside the political system. The articulation of the debate between the West and Islamist groups or between those groups and their own governments in religious terms rather than political ones has the effect of privileging those groups that emphasize cultural conflict at the expense of those who speak the common language of (admittedly divergent) political interests.

A Two-Way Mirror

For all the ambivalence that could be said to characterize the West's sense of what the contemporary Muslim world is about, a mix of fascination and fear, there is a corresponding ambivalence on the other side. For all that the West finds sources of concern both in the political practice and in the intellectual authorities of the Muslim world and Islamic thought, Muslims return the compliment.

Both appear oblivious to the mirrorlike mutuality of this encounter. We might note that the global violence of the West and the violence perpetrated against it are related to each other, and that each is equally complex, spanning a range from covert skullduggery to warfare bounded by laws.¹¹ One might even note that *jihad* in the form of terrorism is morally and doctrinally indistinguishable from many tools used by the West in the “war on terror,” such as “extraordinary rendition” or the gulag of Guantanamo and secret US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) prisons.

An impartial judgment would have to conclude that there is a literalism and reductionism on both sides of the dialogue; each caricatures the other's sources of intellectual and moral authority. Whereas few within a tradition read scripture literally, and authoritative teaching recommends contextualization of scripture, lay opinion in the other tradition inevitably relies on a literal reading of the most provocative scriptures.

The same is true of political discourse. An impartial observer would conclude that few in either civilization engage in violence against the other, and even fewer in covert violence; and that rarely does religious faith or fundamental philosophical conviction clearly rationalize violence against innocents. Why then the mutual sense of a proclivity to violence? Perhaps the question is more properly about the standing in a particular society of discourse in favor of violence. The degree of sympathy with those who practice violence, born of a pragmatic sense of self-defense, may be greater than the willingness of oneself to use

¹¹ Islamic scholars and Muslim intellectuals often note that the principles of the Geneva Convention were prefigured in Islam's meticulous original and long-standing rules governing warfare.

it. In circumstances of perceived existential threat, this may make the more bellicose, more supremacist schools of thought more persuasive than others.

But surely the proclivity to violence is mutual. And not without cogent justifications offered on either side. It might also be observed that what is said here of the encounter between the West and the Muslim world is as true of the encounter between the Muslim and the Hindu worlds.

There is also a mutual sense of superiority over the other. For every insulting Western assertion of the superiority of secular democratic values over what are perceived as the less enlightened social, legal, and political precepts of Islam, one may find an assertion of the superiority of Islamic values, tradition, and way of life. Even among intellectuals of cosmopolitan education and terms of reference, there remains a deep ambivalence toward

Hindus and Muslims

Hindus in India take pride in their history of religious tolerance and in their philosophical authorities validating religious pluralism. Yet too many do so as a basis for triumphalism and a sense of superiority. Few evince awareness of parallel traditions of tolerance among their Muslim compatriots. They focus instead on the historical instances and philosophical sources of zealotry in Islam. Muslims in good measure return the compliment, focusing on the narrow exclusiveness of Hindu social structure rather than its tolerant traditions.

What is unmistakable in the Hindu-Muslim encounter is that the key symbols of cultural identity have become significant grounds of contestation, if not outright tools of contention. Attempts to ban cow slaughter to please devout Hindus inflame Muslim sentiment, which sees these attempts as deliberate attacks on the Muslim way of life. The cancellation of commercial inland fishing licenses in Gujarat is widely understood as a discriminatory policy of an openly anti-Muslim state government, but is rationalized as respect for the religious sentiments of the radically nonviolent Jains. The public expression of faith by both communities, in worship or religious festivals, is a significant *casus belli* between them.

There is no dearth of parallels in the extremist Hindutva movement to the worst “Islamic radicals” that the anti-Muslim imagination can conjure up. There is violence against those who allegedly insult religious figures or challenge the tendentious view of history propounded by the zealots. There are the international networks for propaganda to, and raising money from, expatriates for purposes of militant mobilization, often in the guise of charitable or educational activity.

On the beneficial side are found Hindu intellectuals, paralleling Muslim intellectuals, who stand against bigotry and violence: those who appeal to established Hindu religious thought and authorities to argue for a more tolerant and inclusive vision, and who remind us that Hindu religious faith and Hindutva political ideology are quite distinct.

Religiosity, Identity, and Conflict: A Global Trend

The renewal of interest in religion, the intensification of religion as source of group identity, and the assertion of religious values and identity in politics are global trends: not limited to Muslims, but also found today in the worlds of Christendom and Judaism, among Hindus in India, and among Buddhists in Burma and Sri Lanka (albeit with markedly divergent political agendas and effects). The religious revival in Islam is also not new. Various revivalist movements have been at work in all parts of the Muslim world for longer than a century.

Symbols of culture or cultural identity such as wearing of the *hijab* can sometimes assume disproportionate importance, equally for proponents and opponents. New forms of self-identification often reject old ones. The wearing of the *burqa* comes to replace the traditional *sari*, and thus the established sense of Bengali identity among Muslims in Bangladesh is displaced by a more Middle Eastern form of the "Islamic." Often the manifestation of different cultural symbols takes on a competitive color within, between, and among religious groups, as each feels threatened by the sense of mobilization implicit in the assertion of cultural symbols by the other. Yet each is also often oblivious of the similar effect of its own on the others.

Even the moderate or apolitical in all groups have come to feel that they are constrained in the full practice and expression of their own religion, because of the expression of others in a shared public space. This sense of grievance is expressed even by religious majorities and results in resentments against others. Militant or violent groups in all traditions have appealed to their co-religionists on this basis, and have sought financial and political support among them, including expatriate communities.

Fundamentalism of identity or belief in different religious traditions also takes on a mutually reinforcing character. Muslims often note, by way of self-justification, that Christianity and politics are no strangers to each other in the contemporary West or in the Philippines and Indonesia, and that Christian fundamentalism is a vital religious force in those societies.

The worst of extremism is found equally among all religious groups. Hindutva zealots in India, Sinhalese chauvinist clergy in Sri Lanka, and Muslim zealots bear a remarkable resemblance. All evince a semiliterate reading of scripture, theology, and history. Their normative, historical, and even fictional sources of identity are confused with one another. These form a basis for feelings of superiority or exclusiveness toward others, and for a sense of aggrieved self-justification. Violence, official or popular, is practiced against other groups.

Christians and Jews, equivalent to the corresponding broad-brush and visceral puzzlement among Western opinion about Muslim intentions.¹²

The preamble to the 1990 Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam begins with reference to "the civilizing and historical role of the Islamic Ummah which God made the best

¹² Majid Fakhry notes in *A History of Islamic Philosophy* that at the dawn of Muslim modernism, even Muslim thinkers (such as Muhammad Iqbal, Sayyid Jamal ad-Din Al Afghani Muhammad Abdu, and Ameer Ali) who sought to modernize Islamic thought by emulating the West, nonetheless displayed a mistrust of Western culture and asserted the superiority of the Islamic view of life.

nation” and continues with a description of the ways in which the Ummah should enlighten a humanity “confused by competing trends and ideologies” and plagued with “the chronic problems of this materialistic civilization.” A recent Indian volume, designed to refute the notion that the religious doctrine of *jihad* supports terrorism, is frankly superior in its tone, and argues that a morally superior religion such as Islam could not possibly stoop so low.¹³

Sometimes, the sense of superiority of the Islamic way of life depends precisely on the comprehensive system of thought, guidance, and social order that it offers. It unites metaphysical and worldly; spiritual, ritual, legal, ethical, and political. This is seen as a reflection of a more complex and developed system. For the Western observer, this very feature is a source of disquiet, making Islam seem, if not totalitarian, then totalistic in its approach to the control of every aspect of human life by an ideology. Yet, for every Islamic school of thought that applies divine injunction literally, we may find an equally fundamentalist or Puritan school in Christendom, and in other religious traditions too. Every Islamic argument for the embodiment of religious values in statecraft finds a non-Muslim echo, whether established churches in some Christian societies, political movements to embody religious principles in secular law as in the United States, or similar movements in India or Israel.

Conclusion

The ways in which religion marks identity and inspires action is anything but simple. Its adherents seek in it one or more of spiritual world view, ethical precepts, and marker of group identity. Each of these may also be the basis of political ideology and action. The faith of its adherents will variously emphasize religious duty, mysticism, and attachment to particular philosophical schools of thought. A religion may inspire a generalized pride in the political, social, and intellectual history of the faith, and all else that constitutes its civilization. The political stances of its adherents will vary according to the requirements of their societies as well as their convictions, and will be influenced significantly by the intellectual posture they adopt toward tradition, history, authority, or scripture—skeptical, critical, liberal, conservative, fundamentalist, progressive, or modernist. The relationship between religion and politics in any given social or historical context can only be understood if the discussion of the relationships among these elements is specific to the case at hand.

Such an empirical and precise understanding would allow us to see contemporary Islamic ideologies not as a caricature of an intellectual tradition divorced from other aspects of human history, as autonomous ideology driving political action, but rather as being in a cause-and-effect relationship with processes and challenges the Muslim world shares with

¹³ Faizan Ahmed Azizi, *Jihad in the Light of Holy Quran* (Islamic Awareness Society, 2006).

Strength from Tolerance

The world of Islam and the West might each recognize not only that there are historical antecedents in the other that display great tolerance, but also that such tolerance has been a source of strength. A brief look at some examples suggests that tolerance or intolerance is not intrinsic to a civilization, but rather reflects the particular social, ideological, and political conditions of a particular historical moment.

In the young Muslim world, Christian and pagan scholars such as Hunayn ibn Ishaq of Hira and Thabit ibn Qura of Harran, who survived from the old order, translated the Greek heritage into Arabic (first through Syriac and then directly). Non-Muslims were thus indispensable to Islam's intellectual and scientific rise. The power of the Muslim realm was a result of its ethos of tolerance.

On the part of the West: after the "reconquest" of Toledo in the 12th century, Arabic texts were translated under the patronage of Christian kings. Christian scholars from Italy, Scotland, and Germany, as well as elsewhere, came to study the Hispano-Arab texts of Hellenism. This produced the cultural diffusion and rediscovery of classical heritage that made possible the European Renaissance and the Christian Reformation. The history of Sicily after the Norman defeat of the Arabs, also in the 12th century, tells the same story.

the global community. These include bewildering and often unmanageable social change and mobility, education, the challenges of democratic participation and governance, corruption, resource and environmental degradation, livelihoods, and the ubiquitous and multifaceted issues raised by cyberspace—such as intrusion of the public into the private, volume and speed of information outstripping human and social capacity to manage it, and the loss of control of cultural norms such as those of decency and civility.

The conversation might then be about the broader question of the relationship between religious faith and identity on the one hand and public life (governance, politics, social action, and public ethics) on the other. In that light we would stop looking at movements such as the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt or the Jamat-e-Islami in Pakistan as imperfectly modern because their political action is hampered or discredited by their religious convictions. We might instead see that they are taking note of the deeper-level intellectual and ideological frameworks of their societies to address contemporary issues of development and modernization, of the empowerment of new constituencies, and the expansion of democratic space. In other words, we might look at them much as we have learned to look at Turkey's Justice and Development Party, in terms that we would use to understand the fortunes of all political parties, including secular ones in the West.

Or to take another source of unease between the West and Islam: rather than asking whether Islam requires women to veil themselves in a particular way, whether that constitutes a violation of their human rights, and therefore whether Islam is inherently antithetical to

women's equality, one might instead ask a simple political and social question. Is a Muslim woman freely choosing to adopt the veil or the victim of coercion to do so? This principally political approach would free the veil to be simply the religious duty and mark of religious conviction desired by the devout, while simultaneously addressing the gender equality or human rights issues of individual freedom and choice.

A more empirical approach that avoids panic and alarmism about the relationship between Islam and politics might also calm other panics. For example, what is the precise basis and extent of passive support and sympathy for even the most dangerous terrorist movements? Is there an iconic romance devoid of active political significance? Does amorphous or inchoate youthful radicalization explain some of what we are looking at? Is the iconic significance of Osama bin Laden in the Muslim world like that of Che Guevara among Western youth a few decades ago?

A careful examination, unpacking the religious and political elements, might offer a better appreciation of the rich, progressive, and authentically Islamic thought on many issues that concern casual Western observers. It would also allow for understanding that this reflects a robust tradition; that it is not a recent development.¹⁴ A clarification of Western understanding might also allow for appreciation of the substantial and influential body of Islamic thought that sees religion as held hostage by its politicization, and is now arguing for freeing it.¹⁵

The implications for Western policy would be to eschew condescension, support those aspirations that we share, and let the Muslim world draw on its own substantial sources of inspiration. Understanding that the sources of instability and conflict lie at least as much in politics as in culture, we might support reform and the rule of law in the Muslim world with the same zeal that characterizes our counterterrorism efforts and our public diplomacy.

¹⁴ The Moroccan Fatima Mernissi, author of *The Veil and the Male Elite: A Feminist Interpretation of Women's Rights in Islam*, rejects the idea that women's participation is a modern idea or a Western import. Equally important, she rests on inter alia the work of late 19th century intellectuals of the Salafi, a school also used as authority by radical insurgent and terrorist groups.

¹⁵ The Iranian Abdolkarim Soroush champions democracy as the potential source of Islam's religious renewal, criticizes Islamist theocracy as a corruption of religion by political and economic interests and elites, and argues that human rights are essential for the realization of the ethical vision of Islam.

Appendix 1: Author Biographies

Amit Pandya directs the *Regional Voices: Transnational Challenges* project. He has previously been Counsel to the Government Operations and Foreign Affairs Committees of the House of Representatives, and held senior positions at the Departments of Defense and State and at the US Agency for International Development. He is a South Asia expert and international lawyer, and was formerly an ethnographer and teacher. He holds degrees from Oxford, Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, and Georgetown.

Khalid Rahman is Director General of the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS), a position he has served in since 1982. He has vast experience in research, training, and management, which has significantly contributed into turning IPS into a dynamic think tank. Mr. Rahman has conducted over 400 seminars and roundtables organized by IPS and has been involved in organizing both its research and training programs. He is also invited by various research and training institutions as Master Trainer. The main focus of his research has been on national and regional politics. He has 19 publications and a number of papers to his credit. He is also editor of the IPS periodical *Policy Perspectives*. Mr. Rahman is on the board of a number of social and development organizations and contributes frequently on current affairs. He received his master's degree in economics from the University of Punjab.

Diaa Rashwan is Director of the Program for the Study of Islamist Movements and the Comparative Politics Unit at Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies (ACPSS) in Cairo. He is also Editor-in-Chief of the *Guide of World Islamist Movements*, published annually by the ACPSS since 2006, and Director of the Egyptian Legislative Reform project at the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights. Dr. Rashwan is currently a member of the scientific committee of *Rivista di Intelligence* at the Centro Studi Internazionali, and member of the Advisory Board of the Program for the Study and Research of Terrorism at Cairo University. Previously, he served as Managing Editor at the ACPSS of the *State of Religions in Egypt*, published annually from 1995 to 1999. Dr. Rashwan started his career as a political science researcher at the ACPSS in 1982, and accepted visiting research fellowships at other centers and institutes in France, Finland, and Japan. Among other publications, he edited *The Spectrum of Islamist Movements* (2007).

Amina Rasul is the Director of the Philippine Council for Islam and Democracy. She has served as a research fellow with the SyCip Policy Center at the Asian Institute of Management in the Philippines and as a Senior Fellow with the United States Institute of Peace, where her project focused on Autonomy or Federalism: Self-Rule for Philippine Muslims. She is an expert on issues relating to minority representation and democratic participation in the Philippines, focusing on the Muslim insurgency in Mindanao. Ms. Rasul has a distinguished record of public service and of achievement in the fields of business and finance. From 1994 to 1998, she served as Presidential Adviser on Youth Affairs and as Chair and CEO of the National Youth Commission. From 1990 to 1998, she served as a Commissioner on the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women. Ms. Rasul is a Trustee of the Magbassa Kita Foundation, which conducts literacy and poverty alleviation programs in Mindanao, and has organized mutual guarantee associations for women and indigenous communities. She holds a master's degree in business management from the Asian Institute of Management in the Philippines and an MPA from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.

Prakhar Sharma is an international researcher at the Manasia Research and Analysis Institute in Kabul, specializing in conflict and postconflict research in Afghanistan. Previously, he worked at the Centre for Conflict and Peace Studies (CAPS) in Afghanistan, building its capacity and network. Prior to working in Afghanistan, Mr. Sharma was Senior Analyst at the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS) in Singapore. He holds an MPP from Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore, where he was awarded an APEC-TEMASEK Scholarship. He also holds an MBA from the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) in Manila, and a bachelor's of commerce from Rajasthan University in Jaipur, India. Mr. Sharma speaks English, Hindi, and basic Dari.

Imtiyaz Yusuf is the Head of the Department of Religion in the Graduate School of Philosophy and Religion at Assumption University in Bangkok, Thailand. His academic and research specialization lies in religion, particularly on Islam in Thailand and Southeast Asia. Dr. Yusuf has contributed to the *Oxford Encyclopedia of Modern Islamic World*, *Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, and the *Encyclopedia of Qur'an*. His recent publications include *Religion and Democracy in Thailand* (2008), *The Role of Religious and Philosophical Tradition in Promoting World Peace* (2008), "Dialogue between Islam and Buddhism through the Concepts of Tathagata and Nur Muhammadi" in the *International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture* (February 2005), *Understanding Conflict and Approaching Peace in Southern Thailand* (2007), *Faces of Islam in Southern Thailand* (2007), and *Doing Cross-Cultural Dawah in Southeast Asia* (2007). Dr. Yusuf received his BA in politics from Poona University, his MA in Islamic studies from Aligarh Muslim University; and his PhD in religion from Temple University.

Appendix 2: Experts Consulted

Saadia Abbasi, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
Abdullah Abdullah, former Foreign Minister, Afghanistan
Omar Khan Afridi, former Chief Secretary, North-West Frontier Province, Pakistan
Shaista Jan Ahadi, Paktia Provincial Council, Afghanistan
Anis Ahmad, Riphah International University, Pakistan
Khurshid Ahmad, Institute of Policy Studies, Pakistan
Shamshad Ahmad, former Foreign Secretary, Pakistan
Khalil Ahmed, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, India
Rafeeq Ahmed, Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, India
Muhammad Akram, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, United Kingdom
Mustapha Alani, Gulf Research Center, United Arab Emirates
Mustafa Ali, African Council of Religions Leaders-Religions for Peace, Kenya
Tahir Amin, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan
Tania Amir, Barrister-at-Law, Bangladesh
Taharudin Piang Ampatuan, Major, Philippine Armed Forces; S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies, Singapore
Hady Amr, Brookings Doha Center, Qatar
Hamid Ansari, Vice President of India
Khalid Ansari, Exotic Multimedia Pvt. Ltd., India
A.S.M. Shamsul Arefin, Bangladesh Research and Publications Limited
Sarfaraz Arzu, *The Hindustan Daily*, Urdu, India
Romlah Abubakar Askar, Darunnajah Islamic College; State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta; PTIQ-Institute of Qu'ranic Sciences; University of Al Azhar, Indonesia
Ejaz Ahmed Aslam, Jamaat-e-Islami Hind, India
Febe Armanios, Middlebury College, United States
Mary Ann Arnado, Initiatives for International Dialogue, Mindanao Program, Philippines
Donya Aziz, Pakistan Muslim League
Khalid Aziz, former Chief Secretary, North-West Frontier Province, Pakistan
Faizan Azizi, Islamic Awareness Society, India
Salahuddin Babar, *Daily Naya Diganta*, Bangladesh
V. Balachandran, Retired Senior Police and Intelligence Official, India
K.S. Balasubramanian, Additional Director General of Police, Vigilance and Anti-Corruption Bureau, Government of Kerala, India

Chaider S. Bamualim, Center for the Study of Religion and Culture, State Islamic University Syarif
Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia
Gamal El-Banna, International Islamic Confederation of Labour, Egypt
U. A. B. Razia Akter Banu, University of Dhaka, Bangladesh
Hamid Basyaib, Freedom Institute, Indonesia
K.V. Ahamed Bavappa, Darul Uloom Islamic Investment Trust, India
Jamel R. Cayamodin, Philippine Council on Islam and Democracy
Muzaffar Chishti, Migration Policy Institute, New York University, United States
Iqbal Sobhan Chowdhury, *The Bangladesh Observer*
Asad Durrani, Retired Lieutenant-General, Pakistan Army
Asghar Ali Engineer, Institute of Islamic Studies; Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, India
Irfan A. Engineer, Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, India
Asif Ezdi, former Ambassador, Pakistan
Nilan Fernando, Asia Foundation, Sri Lanka
Mahmood Ahmad Ghazi, College of Islamic Studies, Qatar
Javed Hafeez, former Ambassador, Pakistan
Shah Abdul Halim, Islamic Information Bureau, Bangladesh
Amr Hamazawy, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, United States
Navaid Hamid, National Integration Council, Government of India
Shah Abdul Hannan, *Daily Naya Diganta*; Bangladesh Institute of Islamic Thought
Shomit Ashfaqu Haq, A.M Composite Ltd, Bangladesh
Mushirul Hasan, Vice-Chancellor Jamia Millia Islamia University, India
Zoya Hasan, National Commission for Minorities, Government of India
Muhammad Hasham, Advisor for Religious Affairs; Provincial Director of Education for Religious Affairs, Afghanistan
Syed Iqbal Hasnain, The Energy and Resources Institute, India
Kamal Hossain, Barrister-at-Law, Bangladesh
Rifaat Hussain, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan
Hasanul Haq Inu, Jatio Samaj Tantrik Dal, Bangladesh
Jezima Ismail, Muslim Women's Research and Action Forum, Sri Lanka
V.R. Krishna Iyer, former Judge, Supreme Court of India
Begum Jan, Tribal Women Welfare Association, Pakistan
Zafar Jaspal, Quaid-i-Azam University, Pakistan
Mashur Bin-Ghalib Jundam, Institute of Islamic Studies, University of the Philippines, Diliman
Rizwan Kadri, Associated Architects (I) Pvt. Ltd., India
Sultana Kamal, Ain o Salish Kendro, Bangladesh
Muhammad Kamaruzzaman, Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami
Hemant Karkare, Chief, Anti-Terrorism Squad, Government of Maharashtra, India
Jamshaid Gulzar Kayani, Retired Lieutenant-General, Pakistan Army former Commander 10 Corps
Zahid A. Khan, Aligarh Muslim University, India
Haji Abdul Karim Khan, Mohmand Tribal Council, Afghanistan

Khurram Dastagir Khan, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz
 Malik Waris Khan, Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarians
 Sultan Hayat Khan, former Ambassador, Pakistan
 Tanvir Ahmed Khan, Institute of Strategic Studies, Pakistan
 Wahiduddin Khan, Centre for Peace and Spirituality, India
 Ayesha Khanam, Bangladesh Mahila Parishad
 Afrasiab Khattak, Awami National Party, Pakistan
 Nelly Lahoud, Goucher College, United States
 Hanif Lakdawala, Sanchetana, India
 Tahir Sinsuat Lidasan Jr., Office on Muslim Affairs, Philippines
 Masud Majumder, *Daily Naya Diganta*, Bangladesh
 Peter Mandaville, George Mason University, United States
 Radwan Masmoudi, Center for the Study of Islam and Democracy, United States
 Talat Masood, Retired Lieutenant-General, Pakistan Army
 Rafat Ullah Khan Sailab Mahsud, *Karwan-E-Qabial*, Pakistan
 Nasser Marohomsalic, Muslim Legal Assistance Foundation, Philippines
 Muhammad Khalid Masud, Council of Islamic Ideology, Pakistan
 Shireen M. Mazari, Scholar and Columnist, Pakistan
 Ahmed Bilal Mehboob, Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency
 Marvi Memon, Pakistan Muslim League
 Irfan Merchant, Rahat Welfare Trust, India
 Augusto N. Mielat Jr., Initiatives for International Dialogue, Philippines
 N.P. Hafiz Mohamad, Farook College, India
 Alamigir Mohiuddin, *Daily Naya Diganta*, Bangladesh
 Rustam Shah Mohmand, former Chief Secretary, North-West Frontier Province, Pakistan
 Macrina Morados, Institute of Islamic Studies, University of the Philippines
 Humayun Murad, All India Markazi Momin Conference
 Uzma Naheed, All India Muslim Personal Law Board
 Ali Muhammad Jan Orakzai, Retired Lieutenant-General, Pakistan Army
 Bronson Percival, Center for Naval Analysis, United States
 Agha Murtaza Poya, Pakistan Awami Tehreek
 S.S. Puri, former Director General of Police, Anti Corruption Bureau, Government of
 Maharashtra, India
 Mirak Raheem, Centre for Policy Alternatives, Sri Lanka
 Khalid Rahman, Institute of Policy Studies, Pakistan
 M. Imdadun Rahmat, Paras Foundation, Indonesia
 Mohamed Raouf, Gulf Research Center, United Arab Emirates
 Ali Al-Raschid, Maharlika Village Madrasa, Philippines
 Diaan Rashwan, Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Egypt
 Amina Rasul, Philippine Council for Islam and Democracy
 Santanina Tillah Rasul, Magbassa Kita Foundation, Philippines
 Aasiya Riaz, Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency
 Hasan-Askari Rizvi, Political and Defense Analyst, Pakistan
 Mohammad Abdur Rob, Manarat International University, Bangladesh
 Bahram Said, Jami Masjid, Lachai, Shigal, Afghanistan

I.P. Abdul Salam, Darul Uloom Arabic College, India
Muhammad Farooq Sattar, Muttahida Qaumi Movement, Pakistan
Mujahidul Islam Selim, Communist Party of Bangladesh
Suranjit Sengupta, Awami League, Bangladesh
Iqbal M. Shafi, Sir Syed Memorial Society, Pakistan
Syed Shahabuddin, Advocate, Supreme Court of India
Hassan Shahriar, *The Daily People's View*, Bangladesh
Mujib-ur-Rehman Shami, *Daily Pakistan*
Jeremy Stickings, Department for International Development, United Kingdom
Ahmad Suaedy, Wahid Institute, Indonesia
K.K. Suhail, Students Islamic Organization of India
Abid Qaiyum Suleri, Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan
Muhammad Talib, Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, United Kingdom
H. Nasaruddin Umar, Nadatul Ulama, Indonesia
Haji Mohammad Usman, Tribal Elder, Shinwari Tribe, Afghanistan
Farrukh Waris, Burhani College of Commerce and Arts, India
Ayaz Wazir, former Ambassador, Pakistan
Malik Khan Mar Jan Wazir, North Waziristan Agency Councilor, Pakistan
Joshua White, Johns Hopkins University, United States
Daoud Yaqub, National Security Council, Afghanistan
M. Riza Yehiya, Serendib Institute of Research and Development, Sri Lanka
Imtiyaz Yusuf, Assumption University, Thailand
Javid Yusuf, Lawyer, former head of the Muslim Peace Secretariat, Sri Lanka
Muhammad Saleem Zafar, Institute of Policy Studies, Pakistan
Malik Darya Khan Zakha, Khyber Agency Tribal Elder, Pakistan
Akram Zaki, Pakistan International Human Rights Organization; former Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Pakistan
Ibrahim Zein, International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization, International Islamic University, Malaysia

Appendix 3: Partner Institutions

Middle East

Gulf Research Center (GRC). Based in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, the Gulf Research Center is a privately funded, nonpartisan think tank, education provider, and consultancy specializing in the Gulf region (the six Gulf Cooperation Council countries, and Iran, Iraq, and Yemen). Established in 2000, the Center conducts research on political, social, economic, security, and environmental issues from a Gulf perspective, redressing the current imbalance in Gulf area studies, where regional opinions and interests are underrepresented. With “Knowledge for All” as its motto, the GRC strives to promote different aspects of development and facilitate reforms in the region in order to secure a better future for its citizens.

Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs (IFI). The Issam Fares Institute for Public Policy and International Affairs at the American University of Beirut (AUB) was inaugurated in 2006 to harness the policy-related research of AUB’s internationally respected faculty and other scholars in order to contribute positively to Arab policymaking and international relations. In the established tradition of AUB, IFI is a neutral, dynamic, civil, and open space where people representing all viewpoints in society can gather and discuss significant issues of the day, anchored in a long-standing commitment to mutual understanding and high-quality research. The main goals of IFI are to raise the quality of public policy–related debate and decision making in the Arab world and abroad; to enhance the Arab world’s input in international affairs; and to enrich the quality of interaction among scholars, officials, and civil society actors in the Middle East and abroad. It operates research-to-policy programs in the areas of climate change and environment, Palestinian refugee camps, youth-related issues, and think tanks and public policymaking in the Arab world.

South Asia

Asia Foundation, Sri Lanka. Recognizing that a sustainable peace is tied to overcoming deeper problems of a weakened democracy, lack of justice, and human rights violations,

the Asia Foundation's program in Sri Lanka seeks to identify and support organizations and institutions that promote democratic governance and the rule of law as essential for lasting peace and prosperity. The Asia Foundation programs in Sri Lanka date back to 1954. The Foundation has been a pioneer in strengthening community-based legal services and mediation for the poor in Sri Lanka. The Foundation supported a definitive study on the relationship between aid, conflict, and peace-building in Sri Lanka, and a follow-up study on the US involvement in the country's peace process. The Foundation distributes some 80,000 new English-language publications a year to libraries throughout Sri Lanka.

Institute of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution (IPSCR). The Institute of Peace Studies and Conflict Resolution was established in January 2007 under the aegis of the Centre for Study of Society and Secularism, Mumbai. The overarching goal of the Institute is to create enabling conditions for peace and security by creating awareness in the society of factors affecting peace; addressing myths attributed to religious teachings; research and study into communal and sectarian conflicts; capacity building and peace advocacy, especially among youth; and supporting women's empowerment. IPSCR collaborates with other institutions, including the Tata Institute of Social Science Research, and the Department of Civics and Politics and the Department of Sociology, University of Mumbai.

Institute of Policy Studies (IPS). The Institute of Policy Studies based in Islamabad and founded in 1979 is an autonomous, nonprofit, civil society organization, dedicated to promoting policy-oriented research on Pakistan affairs, international relations, and religion and faith. IPS provides a forum for informed discussion and dialogue on national and international issues; formulates viable plans; and presents key initiatives and policy measures to policymakers, analysts, political leaders, legislators, researchers, academia, civil society organizations, media, and other stakeholders. Periodicals and publications, interaction, dialogue, thematic research, and capacity-building programs are instrumental in its research endeavors. IPS garners collaboration as well as extends its active cooperation to other organizations in one or more areas of research.

Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT). The Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency is an indigenous, independent, and nonpartisan research and training institution committed to strengthening democracy and democratic institutions. PILDAT works to increase the legislative capabilities of elected officials, carries out in-depth analysis of the democratic developments of the country, provides performance reviews of the Parliament and provincial assemblies, and encourages the culture and value of democracy in youth through the first-ever Youth Parliament of Pakistan. The Institute also facilitates the formulation of issue-based caucuses across party lines, including the Young Parliamentarians' Forum, the Parliamentary Consultative Group on Women's Issues, and the Parliamentary Group on Inter-Faith Relations. PILDAT also facilitates non-Parliamentary groups of leading intellectuals and thinkers for

discourse on issues such as free and fair elections, the electoral process, youth and politics, and dialogue between Muslims and the West.

Regional Center for Strategic Studies (RCSS). Based in Colombo, the Regional Center for Strategic Studies is an independent, nonprofit, and nongovernmental organization that fosters collaborative research, networking, and interaction on strategic and international issues pertaining to South Asia. RCSS coordinates research on strategic and security-related issues; promotes interaction among scholars and other professionals in and outside the region who are engaged in South Asian strategic and international studies; and fosters relationships and collaboration among institutions studying issues related to conflict, conflict resolution, cooperation, stability, and security in South Asia.

Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI). The Sustainable Development Policy Institute, based in Islamabad, was founded in 1992 as an independent, nonprofit organization which would serve as a source of expertise on socioeconomic development and environmental issues in Pakistan. The Institute works to conduct policy-oriented research and advocacy from a broad multidisciplinary approach; promote the implementation of policies, programs, laws, and regulations of sustainable development; strengthen civil society through collaboration with other organizations; disseminate research findings through media, conferences, lectures, publications, and curricula development; and contribute to building up national research capacity and infrastructure. The Institute acts as both a generator of original research on sustainable development issues and as an information resource for concerned individuals and institutions. SDPI's function is thus twofold: an advisory role fulfilled through research, policy advice, and advocacy; and an enabling role realized through providing other individuals and organizations with resource materials and training.

The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI). The Energy and Resources Institute was formally established in 1974 in New Delhi with the purpose of tackling the acute problems that mankind is likely to face in the years ahead resulting from the depletion of the earth's energy resources and the pollution their unsustainable use causes. The Institute works to provide environment-friendly solutions to rural energy problems, tackle global climate change issues across continents, advance solutions to the growing urban transport and air pollution, and promote energy efficiency in the Indian industry. TERI is the largest developing country institution devoted to finding innovative solutions toward a sustainable future. TERI has established affiliate institutes abroad: TERI-NA (North America) in Washington, DC; TERI-Europe in London, UK; and has a presence in Japan and Malaysia.

Southeast Asia

Centre for Strategic and International Studies, Jakarta (CSIS). The Centre for Strategic and International Studies based in Jakarta and established in 1971, is an independent,

nonprofit organization focusing on policy-oriented studies on domestic and international issues. Its mission is to contribute to improved policymaking through research, dialogue, and public debate. CSIS believes that long-term planning and vision for Indonesia and the region must be based on an in-depth understanding of economic, political, and social issues including regional and international developments. In the area of foreign policy, the Center's research is complemented and strengthened by its relations with an extensive network of research, academic, and other organizations worldwide. CSIS's research is used by government, universities, research institutions, civil society organizations, media, and businesses.

S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS). Based in Singapore, the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies was established in January 2007 as an autonomous school within the Nanyang Technological University. RSIS is a leading research and graduate teaching institution in strategic international affairs in the Asia-Pacific region. Its name honors the contributions of Mr. S. Rajaratnam, who was one of Singapore's founding fathers and a well-respected visionary diplomat and strategic thinker. RSIS includes the International Centre for Political Violence and Terrorism Research, the Centre of Excellence for National Security, the Centre for Non-Traditional Security Studies, and the Consortium of Non-Traditional Security Studies in Asia. The focus of research is on issues relating to the security and stability of the Asia-Pacific region and their implications for Singapore and other countries in the region.

Singapore Institute of International Affairs (SIIA). The Singapore Institute of International Affairs is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization dedicated to the research, analysis, and discussion of regional and international issues. Founded in 1961 and registered as a membership-based society, SIIA is Singapore's oldest think tank. Its mission is to make Singapore a more cosmopolitan society that better understands the international affairs of its region and the world.

Notes

Political Islamist Movements: The Case of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt

1. The definition for Islamist movements employed here is adopted from the analytical introduction to Diaa Rashwan, ed., *The Spectrum of Islamist Movements* (Berlin: Verlag Hans Schiller, 2007), pp. 13–22.
2. One of the seminal works that has recorded the inception and development of the Muslim Brotherhood is Richard Mitchell's *The Muslim Brotherhood*, Abdul-Salam Radwan, translator (Cairo: Maktabat Madbuli, 1977).
3. Several editions of *Epistles of the Martyred Imam* have been published both inside and outside Egypt. The last edition was supervised by the Brotherhood in Egypt as *Majmu'at Rasa'il al-Imam al-Banna* (I'dad al-Basa'ir lil-Buhuth wal-Dirasat. Dar al-Tawzi' wal-Nashr al-Islamiyya: al-Qahira, 2006). *Memoirs of the Mission and the Missionary* was originally published by Hasan al-Banna as *Mudhakkirat al-Da'wa wal-Da'iya* (Al-Maktab al-Islami: Beirut, al-Tab'at al-Rabi'a, 1978).
4. The text of these documents is available www.ikhwanweb.com/, the official website of the Muslim Brotherhood.
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6. Hasan al-Hudaibi, *Du'at La Qudat* (Dar al-Tawzi' wal-Nashr al-Islamiyya: al-Qahira, 1977).

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17. Ibid.
18. Philippine Human Development Network and the United Nations Development Programme, *Philippine Human Development Report 2005: Peace, Human Security and Human Development* (2005).
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21. J. C. Liow, *Muslim Resistance in Southern Thailand and Southern Philippines: Religion, Ideology and Politics*, Policy Report (Washington, DC: East-West Center, 2006).
22. M. Kamal Hassan, "Islam in Southeast Asia Today," in *Conference on Eastern-Western Dialogue*, pp. 1–16 (Madrid: Casa Asia, 2003).
23. Liow, 2008, op. cit.
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Madrasas in Pakistan: Role and Emerging Trends

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10. Jamia Salfia, Islamabad.
11. Jamia Imdadia, Faisalabad.

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